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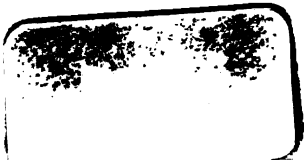
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THE WORKS AND LIFE
OF
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

VOL. VII.

GEBIR, ACTS AND SCENES, AND HELLENICS.

THE WORKS AND LIFE
OF
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

SEVENTH VOLUME

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ACTS AND SCENES,
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LANDOR'S POEMS.

GEBIR.

VOL. VII.

B

LANDOR'S POEMS.

GEBIR.

FIRST BOOK,

I SING the fates of Gebir. He had dwelt
Among those mountain-caverns which retain
His labours yet, vast halls and flowing wells,
Nor have forgotten their old master's name
Though sever'd from his people : here, incenst
By meditating on primeval wrongs,
He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose
Whole nations ; here, ten thousand of most might
He call'd aloud ; and soon Charoba saw
His dark helm hover o'er the land of Nile.

10

What should the virgin do ? should royal knees
Bend suppliant ? or defenceless hands engage
Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms ?
For 'twas reported that nor sword sufficed,
Nor shield immense nor coat of massive mail,
But that upon their towering heads they bore
Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.
This told she Dalica, then cried aloud,
" If on your bosom laying down my head
I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child,
If I have always, and Heav'n knows I have,
Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,
Succour this one distress, recall those days,
Love me, tho' 'twere because you lov'd me then."

20

But whether confident in magic rites
Or toucht with sexual pride to stand implor'd,
Dalica smiled, then spake : " Away those fears.

Though stronger than the strongest of his kind,
 He falls ; on me devolve that charge ; he falls.
 Rather than fly him, stoop thou to allure ; 80
 Nay, journey to his tents. A city stood
 Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad built,
 Whose father Gad built Gadir ; on this ground
 Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.
 Persuade him to restore the walls himself
 In honour of his ancestors, persuade . . .
 But wherefore this advice ? young, unespoused,
 Charoba want persuasions ! and a queen !”
 “ O Dalica !” the shuddering maid exclaim’d, 40
 “ Could I encounter that fierce frightful man ?
 Could I speak ? no, nor sigh.” “ And canst thou reign ? ”
 Cried Dalica ; “ yield empire or comply.”
 Unfixt, though seeming fixt, her eyes downcast,
 The wonted buzz and bustle of the court
 From far through sculptured galleries met her ear ;
 Then lifting up her head, the evening sun
 Pour’d a fresh splendour on her burnisht throne :
 The fair Charoba, the young queen, complied.
 But Gebir, when he heard of her approach,
 Laid by his orb’d shield ; his vizor-helm, 50
 His buckler and his corset he laid by,
 And bade that none attend him : at his side
 Two faithful dogs that urge the silent course,
 Shaggy, deep-chested, croucht ; the crocodile,
 Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid ears
 And push their heads within their master’s hand.
 There was a brightening paleness in his face,
 Such as Diana rising o’er the rocks
 Shower’d on the lonely Latmian ; on his brow
 Sorrow there was, yet nought was there severe. 60
 But when the royal damsel first he saw,
 Faint, hanging on her handmaid, and her knees
 Tottering, as from the motion of the car,
 His eyes lookt earnest on her, and those eyes
 Show’d, if they had not, that they might have, lov’d,
 For there was pity in them at that hour.
 With gentle speech, and more with gentle looks,
 He sooth’d her ; but lest Pity go beyond
 And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim,
 Bending, he kist her garment, and retired. 70
 He went, nor slumber’d in the sultry noon,
 When viands, couches, generous wines, persuade,
 And slumber most refreshes ; nor at night,

When heavy dews are laden with disease ;
 And blindness waits not there for lingering age.
 Ere morning dawn'd behind him, he arrived
 At those rich meadows where young Tamar fed
 The royal flocks entrusted to his care.

"Now," said he to himself, "will I repose
 At least this burthen on a brother's breast."

His brother stood before him : he, amazed,
 Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began.

"Is it thou, brother ! Tamar, is it thou !

Why, standing on the valley's utmost verge,
 Lookest thou on that dull and dreary shore
 Where beyond sight Nile blackens all the sand ?
 And why that sadness ? When I past our sheep
 The dew-drops were not shaken off the bar,
 Therefore if one be wanting, 'tis untold."

"Yes, one is wanting, nor is that untold,"
 Said Tamar ; "and this dull and dreary shore
 Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."

Whereon the tear stole silent down his cheek,
 Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd :

Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying spake.
 "Let me approach thee ; does the morning light
 Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,
 This faint blue lustre under both thine eyes ?"

"O brother, is this pity or reproach ?"

Cried Tamar, "cruel if it be reproach,
 If pity, O how vain !" "Whate'er it be
 That grieves thee, I will pity, thou but speak,
 And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for pang."

"Gebir ! then more than brothers are we now !

Everything (take my hand) will I confess.
 I neither feed the flock nor watch the fold ;
 How can I, lost in love ? But, Gebir, why
 That anger which has risen to your cheek ?
 Can other men ? could you ? what, no reply !
 And still more anger, and still worse conceal'd !
 Are these your promises ? your pity this ?"

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel . .

Mark me aright . . I feel for thee . . proceed . .

Relate me all." "Then will I all relate,"
 Said the young shepherd, gladden'd from his heart.

"'Twas evening, though not sunset, and the tide
 Level with these green meadows, seem'd yet higher :

'Twas pleasant ; and I loosen'd from my neck

The pipe you gave me, and began to play.

O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art ! 120
 It always brings us enemies or love.
 Well, I was playing, when above the waves
 Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend ;
 I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe
 Awkwardly held before my lips half-closed,
 Gebir ! it was a Nymph ! a Nymph divine !
 I can not wait describing how she came,
 How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
 The sailor ; of what happen'd there remains 130
 Enough to say, and too much to forget.
 The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank
 Before I was aware ; for with surprise
 Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
 Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,
 I heard a rustling, and where that arose
 My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
 Her feet resembled those long shells explored
 By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight
 Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.
 Her eyes too ! O immortal Gods ! her eyes 140
 Resembled . . . what could they resemble ? what
 Ever resemble those ? Even her attire
 Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art :
 Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-pod,
 Her girdle the dove-colour'd wave serene.
 ' Shepherd,' said she, ' and will you wrestle now,
 And with the sailor's hardier race engage ?'
 I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
 How to keep up contention : could I fail
 By pressing not too strongly, yet to press ? 150
 ' Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,
 Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
 I am not daunted ; no ; I will engage.'
 ' But first,' said she, ' what wager will you lay ?'
 ' A sheep,' I answered : ' add whate'er you will.'
 ' I can not,' she replied, ' make that return :
 Our hided vessels in their pitchy round
 Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
 But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
 Within, and they that lustre have imbibed 160
 In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked
 His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave :
 Shake one and it awakens, then apply
 Its polisht lips to your attentive ear,
 And it remembers its august abodes,

And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
 And I have others given me by the nymphs,
 Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have;
 But we, by Neptune! for no pipe contend,
 This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.' 170
 Now came she forward eager to engage,
 But first her dress, her bosom then survey'd,
 And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.
 Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like heav'n,
 To baffle touch, and rose forth undefined:
 Above her knee she drew the robe succinct,
 Above her breast, and just below her arms.
 'This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,
 If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.' 180
 Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
 And, rushing at me, closed: I thrill'd throughout
 And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.
 Again with violent impulse gusht my blood,
 And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.
 Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms
 I clung around her neck; the vest beneath
 Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined: 190
 Often mine springing with eluded force
 Started aside and trembled till replaced:
 And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
 My bosom and my throat felt so comprest
 That life was almost quivering on my lips,
 Yet nothing was there painful: these are signs
 Of secret arts and not of human might;
 What arts I can not tell; I only know
 My eyes grew dizzy and my strength decay'd;
 I was indeed o'ercome . . . with what regret,
 And more, with what confusion, when I reacht 200
 The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,
 'This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.'
 She smiled, and more of pleasure than disdain
 Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,
 And eyes that languisht, lengthening, just like love.
 She went away; I on the wicker gate
 Leant, and could follow with my eyes alone.
 The sheep she carried easy as a cloak;
 But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
 And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet 210
 Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip,

One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,
 Then all my passions mingling fell in tears;
 Restless then ran I to the highest ground
 To watch her; she was gone; gone down the tide;
 And the long moon-beam on the hard wet sand
 Lay like a jasper column half up-rear'd."

"But, Tamar! tell me, will she not return?"

"She will return, yet not before the moon
 Again is at the full: she promis't this,
 Tho' when she promis't I could not reply." 220

"By all the Gods I pity thee! go on,
 Fear not my anger, look not on my shame,
 For when a lover only hears of love
 He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.
 Away with watchful nights and lonely days,
 Contempt of earth and aspect up to heaven,
 With contemplation, with humility,
 A tatter'd cloak that pride wears when deform'd,
 Away with all that hides me from myself, 230

Parts me from others, whispers I am wise:
 From our own wisdom less is to be reapt
 Than from the barest folly of our friend.
 Tamar! thy pastures, large and rich, afford
 Flowers to thy bees and herbage to thy sheep;
 But, battened on too much, the poorest croft
 Of thy poor neighbour yields what thine denies."

They hasten'd to the camp, and Gebir there
 Resolved his native country to forego,
 And order'd from those ruins to the right 240
 They forthwith raise a city. Tamar heard
 With wonder, tho' in passing 'twas half-told,
 His brother's love, and sigh'd upon his own.

SECOND BOOK.

THE Gadite men the royal charge obey.
 Now fragments weigh'd up from the uneven streets
 Leave the ground black beneath; again the sun
 Shines into what were porches, and on steps
 Once warm with frequentation; clients, friends,
 All morning, satchel'd idlers all mid-day,
 Lying half-up and languid tho' at games.

Some raise the painted pavement, some on wheels
 Draw slow its laminous length, some intersperse 10
 Salt water thro' the sordid heaps, and seize
 The flowers and figures starting fresh to view;
 Others rub hard large masses, and essay

To polish into white what they misdeem
 The growing green of many trackless years.*
 Far off at intervals the axe resounds
 With regular strong stroke, and nearer home
 Dull falls the mallet with long labour fringed.
 Here arches are discover'd; there huge beams
 Resist the hatchet, but in fresher air
 Soon drop away: there spreads a marble squared 20
 And smoothen'd; some high pillar for its base
 Chose it, which now lies ruin'd in the dust.
 Clearing the soil at bottom, they espy
 A crevice, and, intent on treasure, strive
 Strenuous and groan to move it: one exclaims,
 "I hear the rusty metal grate; it moves!"
 Now, overturning it, backward they start,
 And stop again, and see a serpent pant,
 See his throat thicken and the crisped scales
 Rise ruffled, while upon the middle fold 30
 He keeps his wary head and blinking eye
 Curling more close, and crouching ere he strike.
 Go, mighty men, invade far cities, go,
 And be such treasure portions to your heirs.
 Six days they labour'd: on the seventh day
 Returning, all their labours were destroy'd.
 'Twas not by mortal hand, or from their tents
 'Twere visible; for these were now removed
 Above, where neither noxious mist ascends
 Nor the way wearies ere the work begin. 40
 There Gebir, pierced with sorrow, spake these words:
 "Ye men of Gades, arm'd with brazen shields,
 And ye of near Tartessus, where the shore
 Stoops to receive the tribute which all owe
 To Bœtis and his banks for their attire,
 Ye too whom Durius bore on level meads,
 Inherent in your hearts is bravery,
 For earth contains no nation where abounds
 The generous horse and not the warlike man.
 But neither soldier now nor steed avails, 50
 Nor steed nor soldier can oppose the Gods,
 Nor is there aught above like Jove himself,
 Nor weighs against his purpose, when once fixt,
 Aught but, with supplicating knee, the Prayers.
 Swifter than light are they, and every face,
 Tho' different, glows with beauty; at the throne
 Of Mercy, when clouds shut it from mankind,

* *Verde Antico* is found here.

They fall bare-bosom'd, and indignant Jove
 Drops at the soothing sweetness of their voice
 The thunder from his hand. Let us arise 60
 On these high places daily, beat our breast,
 Prostrate ourselves and deprecate his wrath."

The people bow'd their bodies and obey'd.
 Nine mornings with white ashes on their heads
 Lamented they their toil each night o'erthrown,
 And now the largest orbit of the year,
 Leaning o'er black Mocattam's rubied brow,*
 Proceeded slow, majestic, and serene,
 Now seemed not further than the nearest cliff,
 And crimson light struck soft the phosphor wave. 70
 Then Gebir spake to Tamar in these words :
 "Tamar! I am thy elder and thy king,
 But am thy brother too, nor ever said
 Give me thy secret and become my slave :
 But haste thee not away ; I will myself
 Await the nymph, disguised in thy attire."

Then starting from attention, Tamar cried,
 "Brother! in sacred truth it can not be.
 My life is yours, my love must be my own.
 O surely he who seeks a second love 80
 Never felt one, or 'tis not one I feel."

But Gebir with complacent smile replied,
 "Go then, fond Tamar, go in happy hour,
 But, ere thou partest, ponder in thy breast
 And well bethink thee, lest thou part deceived,
 Will she disclose to thee the mysteries
 Of our calamity? and unconstrain'd?
 When even her love thy strength had to disclose.
 My heart indeed is full, but, witness heaven!
 My people, not my passion, fill my heart." 90

"Then let me kiss thy garment," said the youth,
 "And heaven be with thee, and on me thy grace."

Him then the monarch thus once more address :
 "Be of good courage : hast thou yet forgot
 What chaplets languisht round thy unburnt hair,
 In colour like some tall smooth beech's leaves
 Curl'd by autumnal suns?" How flattery
 Excites a pleasant, soothes a painful shame!
 "These," amid stifled blushes Tamar said,
 "Were of the flowering raspberry and vine: 100
 But ah! the seasons will not wait for love.
 Seek out some other now." They parted here :

* The summits are of a deep red.

And Gebir, bending through the woodland, cull'd
 The creeping vine and viscous raspberry,
 Less green and less compliant than they were,
 And twisted in those mossy tufts that grow
 On brakes of roses when the roses fade :
 And as he passes on, the little hinds
 That shake for bristly herds the foodful bough,
 Wonder, stand still, gaze, and trip satisfied ;
 Pleas'd more if chesnut, out of prickly husk
 Shot from the sandal, roll along the glade.

110

And thus unnoticed went he, and untired
 Stept up the acclivity ; and as he stept,
 And as the garlands nodded o'er his brow,
 Sudden from under a close alder sprang
 Th' expectant nymph, and seiz'd him unaware.
 He stagger'd at the shock ; his feet at first
 Slipt backward from the wither'd grass short-grazed,
 But striking out one arm, tho' without aim,
 Then grasping with his other, he enclosed
 The struggler ; she gain'd not one step's retreat,
 Urging with open hands against his throat
 Intense, now holding in her breath constrain'd,
 Now pushing with quick impulse and by starts,
 Till the dust blacken'd upon every pore.

120

Nearer he drew her and yet nearer, claspt
 Above the knees midway, and now one arm
 Fell, and her other lapsing o'er the neck
 Of Gebir, swung against his back incurved,
 The swoln veins glowing, deep, and with a groan
 On his broad shoulder fell her face reclined.
 But ah ! she knew not whom that roseate face
 Cool'd with its breath ambrosial ; for she stood
 Higher on the bank, and often swept and broke
 His chaplets mingled with her loosen'd hair.

130

Whether, while Tamar tarried, came desire,
 And she, grown languid, loost the wings of Love
 Which she before held proudly at her will,
 And, nought but Tamar in her soul, and nought
 (Where Tamar was) that seem'd or fear'd deceit,
 To fraud she yielded what no force had gain'd ;
 Or whether Jove in pity to mankind,
 When from his crystal fount the visual orbs
 He fill'd with piercing ether, and endued
 With somewhat of omnipotence, ordain'd
 That never two fair forms at once torment
 The human heart and draw it different ways,

140

And thus, in prowess like a god, the chief
 Subdued her strength nor softened at her charms, 150
 The nymph divine, the magic mistress, fail'd.
 Recovering, still half-resting on the turf,
 She lookt up wildly, and could now descry
 The kingly brow archt lofty for command.

“Traitor!” said she undaunted, tho’ amaze
 Threw o’er her varying cheek the air of fear,
 “Thinkest thou thus that with impunity
 Thou hast forsooth deceived me? dar’st thou deem
 Those eyes not hateful that have seen me fall?
 O heaven! soon may they close on my disgrace. 160
 Merciless man! what! for one sheep estranged
 Hast thou thrown into dungeons and of day
 Amerced thy shepherd? hast thou, while the iron
 Pierced thro’ his tender limbs into his soul,
 By threats, by tortures, torn out that offence,
 And heard him (O could I) avow his love?
 Say, hast thou? cruel, hateful! ah my fears!
 I feel them true! speak, tell me, are they true?”

She, blending thus entreaty with reproach,
 Bent forward, as tho’ falling on her knee 170
 Whence she had hardly risen, and at this pause
 Shed from her large dark eyes a shower of tears.

The Iberian King her sorrow thus consoled.
 “Weep no more, heavenly maiden, weep no more :
 Neither by force withheld nor choice estranged,
 Thy Tamar lives, and only lives for thee.
 Happy, thrice happy, you! ’tis me alone
 Whom heaven and earth and ocean with one hate
 Conspire on, and throughout each path pursue.
 Whether in waves beneath or skies above 180
 Thou hast thy habitation, ’tis from heaven,
 From heaven alone, such power, such charms descend.
 Then O! discover whence that ruin comes
 Each night upon our city; whence are heard
 Those yells of rapture round our fallen walls:
 In our affliction can the Gods delight,
 Or meet oblation for the Nymphs are tears?”

He spake, and indignation sank in woe.
 Which she perceiving, pride refresh’d her heart,
 Hope wreath’d her mouth with smiles, and she exclaim’d: 180
 “Neither the Gods afflict you, nor the Nymphs.
 Return me him who won my heart, return
 Him whom my bosom pants for, as the steeds
 In the sun’s chariot for the western wave.

The Gods will prosper thee, and Tamar prove
 How Nymphs, the torments that they cause, assuage.
 Promise me this ; indeed I think thou hast,
 But 'tis so pleasing, promise it once more."

"Once more I promise," cried the gladden'd king,
 "By my right-hand and by myself I swear,
 And ocean's Gods and heaven's Gods I adjure,
 Thou shalt be Tamar's, Tamar shall be thine."

200

Then she, regarding him long fixt, replied :
 "I have thy promise, take thou my advice.

Gebir ! this land of Egypt is a land
 Of incantation, demons rule these waves ;
 These are against thee, these thy works destroy.
 Where thou hast built thy palace, and hast left
 The seven pillars to remain in front,
 Sacrifice there, and all these rites observe.

210

Go, but go early, ere the gladsome Hours
 Strew saffron in the path of rising Morn,
 Ere the bee buzzing o'er flowers fresh disclosed
 Examine where he may the best alight
 Nor scatter off the bloom, ere cold-lipt herds
 Crop the pale herbage round each other's bed,
 Lead seven bulls well pastur'd and well form'd,
 Their neck unblemisht and their horn unring'd,
 And at each pillar sacrifice thou one.
 Around each base rub thrice the blackening blood,
 And burn the curling shavings of the hoof,
 And of the forehead locks thou also burn ;
 The yellow galls, with equal care preserv'd,
 Pour at the seventh statue from the north."

220

He listen'd, and on her his eyes intent
 Perceiv'd her not, and she had disappear'd ;
 So deep he ponder'd her important words.

And now had morn arisen and he perform'd
 Almost the whole enjoined him : he had reacht
 The seventh statue, pour'd the yellow galls,
 The forelock from his left he had releast,
 And burnt the curling shavings of the hoof
 Moistened with myrrh ; when suddenly a flame
 Spired from the fragrant smoke, nor sooner spired
 Down sank the brazen fabric at his feet.

230

He started back, gazed, nor could aught but gaze,
 And cold dread stiffen'd up his hair flower-twined ;
 Then with a long and tacit step, one arm
 Behind, and every finger wide outspread,
 He lookt and totter'd on a black abyss.

240

He thought he sometimes heard a distant voice
 Breathe thro' the cavern's mouth, and further on
 Faint murmurs now, now hollow groans reply.
 Therefore suspended he his crook above,
 Dropt it, and heard it rolling step by step :
 He enter'd, and a mingled sound arose
 Like one (when shaken from some temple's roof
 By zealous hand, they and their fretted nest)
 Of birds that wintering watch in Memnon's tomb,
 And tell the halcyons when spring first returns.

250

THIRD BOOK.

O FOR the spirit of that matchless man
 Whom Nature led throughout her whole domain,
 While he embodied breath'd ethereal air !

Tho' panting in the play-hour of my youth
 I drank of Avon too, a dangerous draught,
 That rous'd within the feverish thirst of song,
 Yet never may I trespass o'er the stream
 Of jealous Acheron, nor alive descend
 The silent and unsearchable abodes
 Of Erebus and Night, nor unchastised
 Lead up long-absent heroes into day.
 When on the pausing theatre of earth
 Eve's shadowy curtain falls, can any man
 Bring back the far-off intercepted hills,
 Grasp the round rock-built turret, or arrest
 The glittering spires that pierce the brow of Heaven ?
 Rather can any with outstripping voice
 The parting Sun's gigantic strides recall ?

10

Twice sounded *Gebir* ! twice th' Iberian king
 Thought it the strong vibration of the brain
 That struck upon his ear ; but now descried
 A form, a man, come nearer : as he came
 His unshorn hair (grown soft in these abodes)
 Waved back, and scatter'd thin and hoary light.
 Living men called him Aroar, but no more
 In celebration or recording verse
 His name is heard, no more by Arnon's side
 The well-wall'd city, which he rear'd, remains.
 Gebir was now undaunted, for the brave
 When they no longer doubt, no longer fear,
 And would have spoken, but the shade began.

20

“ Brave son of Hesperus ! no mortal hand
 Has led thee hither, nor without the Gods

30

Penetrate thy firm feet the vast profound.
 Thou knowest not that here thy fathers lie,
 The race of Sidad ; theirs was loud acclaim
 When living, but their pleasure was in war ;
 Triumphs and hatred followed : I myself
 Bore, men imagin'd, no inglorious part ;
 The Gods thought otherwise, by whose decree
 Depriv'd of life, and more, of death depriv'd,
 I still hear shrieking thro' the moonless night
 Their discontented and deserted shades.
 Observe these horrid walls, this rueful waste !
 Here some refresh the vigour of the mind
 With contemplation and cold penitence.
 Nor wonder, while thou hearest, that the soul,
 Thus purified, hereafter may ascend
 Surmounting all obstruction, nor ascribe
 The sentence to indulgence ; each extreme
 Hath tortures for ambition ; to dissolve
 In everlasting languor, to resist
 Its impulse, but in vain ; to be enclosed
 Within a limit, and that limit fire ;
 Sever'd from happiness, from eminence,
 And flying, but hell bars us, from ourselves.

Yet rather all these torments most endure
 Than solitary pain, and sad remorse,
 And towering thoughts on their own breast o'erturn'd
 And piercing to the heart : such penitence,
 Such contemplation theirs ! thy ancestors
 Bear up against them, nor will they submit
 To conquering Time the asperities of Fate :
 Yet could they but revisit earth once more,
 How gladly would they poverty embrace,
 How labour, even for their deadliest foe !
 It little now avails them to have rais'd
 Beyond the Syrian regions, and beyond
 Phenicia, trophies, tributes, colonies :
 Follow thou me : mark what it all avails."

Him Gebir follow'd, and a roar confused
 Rose from a river rolling in its bed,
 Not rapid, that would rouse the wretched souls,
 Nor calmly, that might lull them to repose ;
 But with dull weary lapses it upheaved
 Billows of bale, heard low, yet heard afar ;
 For when hell's iron portals let out night,
 Often men start and shiver at the sound,
 And lie so silent on the restless couch,

They hear their own hearts beat. Now Gebir breath'd 80
 Another air, another sky beheld :
 Twilight broods here, lull'd by no nightingale
 Nor waken'd by the shrill lark dewy-wing'd,
 But glowing with one sullen sunless heat.
 Beneath his foot nor sprouted flower nor herb,
 Nor chirpt a grasshopper ; above his head
 Phlegethon form'd a fiery firmament ;
 Part were sulphurous clouds involving, part
 Shining like solid ribs of molten brass ;
 For the fierce element, which else aspires 90
 Higher and higher and lessens to the sky,
 Below, Earth's adamantine arch rebuft.
 Gebir, tho' now such languor held his limbs,
 Scarce aught admir'd he, yet he this admir'd ;
 And thus addrest him then the conscious guide.
 " Beyond that river lie the happy fields ;
 From them fly gentle breezes, which when drawn
 Against yon crescent convex, but unite
 Stronger with what they could not overcome.
 Thus they that scatter freshness thro' the groves 100
 And meadows of the fortunate, and fill
 With liquid light the marble bowl of Earth,
 And give her blooming health and sprightly force,
 Their fire no more diluted, nor its darts
 Blunted by passing thro' thick myrtle-bowers,
 Neither from odours rising half dissolved,
 Point forward Phlegethon's eternal flame ;
 And this horizon is the spacious bow
 Whence each ray reaches to the world above."
 The hero pausing, Gebir then besought 110
 What region held his ancestors, what clouds,
 What waters, or what Gods, from his embrace.
 Aroar then sudden, as tho' rous'd, renew'd.
 " Come thou, if ardour urges thee and force
 Suffices . . mark me, Gebir, I unfold
 No fable to allure thee . . on ! behold
 Thy ancestors !" and lo ! with horrid gasp
 The panting flame above his head recoil'd,
 And thunder through his heart and life-blood throbb'd.
 Such sound could human organs once conceive, 120
 Cold, speechless, palsied, not the soothing voice
 Of friendship or almost of Deity
 Could raise the wretched mortal from the dust ;
 Beyond man's home condition they ! With eyes
 Intent, and voice desponding, and unheard

By Aroar, tho' he tarried at his side,
 "They know me not," cried Gebir, "O my sires,
 Ye know me not! they answer not, nor hear.
 How distant are they still! what sad extent
 Of desolation must we overcome! 130
 Aroar! what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
 Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
 Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
 Shrinks yelling from that sword there engine-hung;
 He too among my ancestors?" "O King!
 Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
 Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
 "He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the Gods?"
 "Gebir! he fear'd the Demons, not the Gods,
 Tho' them indeed his daily face adored, 140
 And was no warrior; yet the thousand lives
 Squander'd as stones to exercise a sling,
 And the tame cruelty and cold caprice . . .
 Oh madness of mankind! address, adored!
 O Gebir! what are men? or where are Gods?
 Behold the giant next him, how his feet
 Plunge floundering mid the marshes yellow-flower'd,
 His restless head just reaching to the rocks,
 His bosom tossing with black weeds besmear'd,
 How writhes he 'twixt the continent and isle! 150
 What tyrant with more insolence e'er claim'd
 Dominion? when from the heart of Usury
 Rose more intense the pale-flamed thirst for gold?
 And call'd forsooth *Deliverer!* False or fools
 Who prais'd the dull-ear'd miscreant, or who hoped
 To soothe your folly and disgrace with praise!
 Hearest thou not the harp's gay simpering air
 And merriment afar? then come, advance;
 And now behold him! mark the wretch accurst
 Who sold his people to a rival king: 160
 Self-yoked they stood two ages unredeem'd."
 "O horror! what pale visage rises there!
 Speak, Aroar! me perhaps mine eyes deceive,
 Inured not, yet methinks they there descry
 Such crimson haze as sometimes drowns the moon.
 What is yon awful sight? why thus appears
 That space between the purple and the crown?"
 "I will relate their stories when we reach
 Our confines," said the guide; "for thou, O king,
 Differing in both from all thy countrymen, 170
 Seest not their stories and hast seen their fates.

But while we tarry, lo again the flame
 Riseth, and murmuring hoarse, points straighter; haste,
 'Tis urgent, we must hence." "Then O adieu!"
 (cried Gebir and groan'd loud: at last a tear
 Burst from his eyes turn'd back, and he exclaimed:
 "Am I deluded? O ye powers of hell!
 Suffer me . . . O my fathers! am I torn . . ."
 He spake, and would have spoken more, but flames
 Enwrapt him round and round intense; he turn'd 180
 And stood held breathless in a ghost's embrace.
 "Gebir! my son! desert me not! I heard
 Thy calling voice, nor fate withheld me more:
 One moment yet remains; enough to know
 Soon will my torments, soon will thine, expire.
 O that I e'er exacted such a vow!
 When dipping in the victim's blood thy hand,
 First thou withdrew'st it, looking in my face
 Wondering; but when the priest my will explain'd,
 Then swarest thou, repeating what he said, 190
 How against Egypt thou wouldst raise that hand
 And bruise the seed first risen from our line.
 Therefore in death what pangs have I endured!
 Rackt on the fiery centre of the sun,
 Twelve years I saw the ruin'd world roll round.
 Shudder not; I have borne it; I deserved
 My wretched fate; be better thine; farewell."
 "O stay, my father! stay one moment more . . .
 Let me return thee that embrace . . . 'tis past . . .
 Aroar! how could I quit it unreturn'd! 200
 And now the gulf divides us, and the waves
 Of sulphur bellow thro' the blue abyss.
 And is he gone for ever! and I come
 In vain?" Then sternly said the guide: "In vain!
 Sayst thou? what wouldst thou more? alas, O prince,
 None come for pastime here! but is it nought
 To turn thy feet from evil? is it nought
 Of pleasure to that shade if they are turn'd?
 For this thou camest hither: he who dares
 To penetrate this darkness, nor regards 210
 The dangers of the way, shall reascend
 In glory, nor the gates of hell retard
 His steps, nor demon's nor man's art prevail.
 Once in each hundred years, and only once,
 Whether by some rotation of the world,
 Or whether will'd so by some pow'r above,
 This flaming arch starts back, each realm descries

Its opposite, and Bliss from her repose
Freshens and feels her own security."

"Security!" cried out the Gadite king,
"And feel they not compassion?" "Child of Earth,"

220

Calmly said Aroar at his guest's surprise,
"Some so disfigur'd by habitual crimes,
Others are so exalted, so refined,
So permeated by heaven, no trace remains
Graven on earth: here Justice is supreme;
Compassion can be but where passions are.
Here are discover'd those who tortured Law
To silence or to speech, as pleas'd themselves;
Here also those who boasted of their zeal

230

And lov'd their country for the spoils it gave.
Hundreds, whose glitt'ring merchandise the lyre
Dazzled vain wretches drunk with flattery,
And wafted them in softest airs to Heaven,
Doom'd to be still deceiv'd, here still attune
The wonted strings and fondly woo applause:
Their wish half granted, they retain their own;
But madden at the mockery of the shades.

Upon the river's other side there grow
Deep olive groves; there other ghosts abide,

240

Blest indeed they, but not supremely blest.
We can not see beyond, we can not see
Aught but our opposite; and here are fates
How opposite to ours! here some observ'd
Religious rites, some hospitality:
Strangers, who from the good old men retired,
Closed the gate gently, lest from generous use
Shutting and opening of its own accord,
It shake unsettled slumbers off their couch:
Some stopt revenge athirst for slaughter, some
Sow'd the slow olive for a race unborn.
These had no wishes, therefore none are crown'd:
But theirs are tufted banks, theirs umbrage, theirs
Enough of sunshine to enjoy the shade,
And breeze enough to lull them to repose."

Then Gebir cried: "Illustrious host, proceed.
Bring me among the wonders of a realm
Admired by all, but like a tale admired.

We take our children from their cradled sleep,
And on their fancy from our own impress
Ethereal forms and adulating fates!

250

But, ere departing for such scenes
We seize the hand, we hang upon

c 2

ourselves.
the neck,

Our beds cling heavy round us with our tears,
 Agony strives with agony. Just Gods!
 Wherefore should wretched mortals thus believe,
 Or wherefore should they hesitate to die?"

Thus while he question'd, all his strength dissolv'd
 Within him, thunder shook his troubled brain,
 He started, and the cavern's mouth survey'd
 Near, and beyond his people; he arose,
 And bent toward them his bewilder'd way.

270

FOURTH BOOK.

THE king's lone road, his visit, his return,
 Were not unknown to Dalica, nor long
 The wondrous tale from royal ears delay'd.
 When the young queen had heard who taught the rites,
 Her mind was shaken, and what first she askt
 Was, whether the sea-maids were very fair,
 And was it true that even gods were moved
 By female charms beneath the waves profound,
 And join'd to them in marriage, and had sons.
 Who knows but Gebir sprang then from the Gods!
 He that could pity, he that could obey,
 Flatter'd both female youth and princely pride,
 The same ascending from amid the shades
 Show'd Power in frightful attitude: the queen
 Marks the surpassing prodigy, and strives
 To shake off terror in her crowded court,
 And wonders why she trembles, nor suspects
 How Fear and Love assume each other's form,
 By birth and secret compact how allied.
 Vainly (to conscious virgins I appeal)
 Vainly with crouching tigers, prowling wolves,
 Rocks, precipices, waves, storms, thunderbolts,
 All his immense inheritance, would Fear
 The simplest heart, should Love refuse, assail:
 Consent, the maiden's pillowed ear imbibes
 Constancy, honour, truth, fidelity,
 Beauty and ardent lips and longing arms;
 Then fades in glimmering distance half the scene,
 Then her heart quails and flutters and would fly;
 'Tis her beloved! not to her! ye Powers!
 What doubting maid exacts the vow? behold
 Above the myrtles his protesting hand!
 Such ebbs of doubt and swells of jealousy
 Toss the fond bosom in its hour of sleep
 And float around the eyelids and sink thro'.

10

20

30

Lo! mirror of delight in cloudless days,
 Lo! thy reflection: 'twas when I exclaim'd,
 With kisses hurried as if each foresaw
 Their end, and reckon'd on our broken bonds,
 And could at such a price such loss endure, 40
 "O what to faithful lovers met at morn,
 What half so pleasant as imparted fears!"
 Looking recumbent how Love's column rose
 Marmoreal, trophied round with golden hair,
 How in the valley of one lip unseen
 He slumber'd, one his unstrung bow imprest.
 Sweet wilderness of soul-entangling charms!
 Led back by Memory, and each blissful maze
 Retracing, me with magic power detain
 Those dimpled cheeks, those temples violet-tinged, 50
 Those lips of nectar and those eyes of heaven!

Charoba, tho' indeed she never drank *
 The liquid pearl, or twined the nodding crown,
 Or, when she wanted cool and calm repose,
 Dreamt of the crawling asp and grated tomb,
 Was wretched up to royalty: the jibe
 Struck her, most piercing where love pierced before,
 From those whose freedom centres in their tongue,
 Handmaidens, pages, courtiers, priests, buffoons. 60
 Congratulations here, there prophecies,
 Here children, not repining at neglect
 While tumult sweeps them ample room for play;
 Every-where questions answer'd ere begun,
 Every-where crowds, for every-where alarm.
 Thus winter gone, nor spring (tho' near) arriv'd,
 Urged slanting onward by the bickering breeze
 That issues from beneath Aurora's car,
 Shudder the sombrous waves; at every beam
 More vivid, more by every breath impell'd,
 Higher and higher up the fretted rocks, 70
 Their turbulent refulgence they display.
 Madness, which like the spiral element
 The more it seizes on the fiercer burns,
 Hurried them blindly forward, and involved
 In flame the senses and in gloom the soul.

Determin'd to protect the country's gods,
 And asking their protection, they adjure

* Antonius was afraid of poison; Cleopatra, to prove the injustice of his suspicions, and the ease with which a poison might be administered, shook it from her crown of flowers into his goblet: before he had raised it to his lips, she told him, and established his confidence.

Each other to stand forward, and insist
 With zeal, and trample under foot the slow ;
 And disregardful of the Sympathies 80
 Divine, those Sympathies whose delicate hand
 Touching the very eyeball of the heart,
 Awakens it, not wounds it nor inflames,
 Blind wretches ! they with desperate embrace
 Hang on the pillar till the temple fall.
 Oft the grave judge alarms religious wealth
 And rouses anger under gentle words.
 Woe to the wiser few who dare to cry
 " People ! these men are not your enemies,
 Inquire their errand, and resist when wrong'd." 90
 Together childhood, priesthood, womanhood,
 The scribes and elders of the land, exclaim
 " Seek they not hidden treasure in the tombs ?
 Raising the ruins, levelling the dust,
 Who can declare whose ashes they disturb ?
 Build they not fairer cities than our own,
 Extravagant enormous apertures
 For light, and portals larger, open courts
 Where all ascending all are unconfin'd,
 And wider streets in purer air than ours ? 100
 Temples quite plain with equal architraves
 They build, nor bearing gods like ours imboss.
 O profanation ! O our ancestors !"
 Tho' all the vulgar hate a foreign face,
 It more offends weak eyes and homely age,
 Dalica most, who thus her aim pursued.
 " My promise, O Charoba, I perform.
 Proclaim to gods and men a festival
 Throughout the land, and bid the strangers eat !
 Their anger thus we haply may disarm." 110
 " O Dalica," the grateful queen replied,
 " Nurse of my childhood, soother of my cares,
 Preventer of my wishes, of my thoughts,
 O pardon youth, O pardon royalty !
 If hastily to Dalica I sued,
 Fear might impell me, never could distrust.
 Go then, for wisdom guides thee, take my name,
 Issue what most imports and best beseems,
 And sovranly shall sanction the decree."
 And now Charoba was alone, her heart 120
 Grew lighter ; she sat down, and she arose,
 She felt voluptuous tenderness, but felt
 That tenderness for Dalica ; she pruis'd

Her kind attention, warm solicitude,
 Her wisdom ; for what wisdom pleas'd like hers !
 She was delighted ; should she not behold
 Gebir ? she blusht ; but she had words to speak,
 She form'd them and reform'd them, with regret
 That there was somewhat lost with every change ;
 She could replace them ; what would that avail ? 130
 Moved from their order they have lost their charm.

While thus she strew'd her way with softest words,
 Others grew up before her, but appear'd
 A plenteous rather than perplexing choice :
 She rubb'd her palms with pleasure, heav'd a sigh,
 Grew calm again, and thus her thoughts revolv'd.

“ But he descended to the tombs ! the thought
 Thrills me, I must avow it, with affright.
 And wherefore ? shows he not the more belov'd
 Of heav'n ? or how ascends he back to-day ? 140
 Then has he wrong'd me ? could he want a cause
 Who has an army and was bred to reign ?
 And yet no reasons against rights he urg'd,
 He threaten'd not, proclaim'd not ; I approach,
 He hasten'd on ; I spake, he listen'd ; wept,
 He pity'd me ; he lov'd me, he obey'd ;
 He was a conqueror, still am I a queen.”

She thus indulg'd fond fancies, when the sound
 Of timbrels and of cymbals struck her ear,
 And horns and howlings of wild jubilee. 150
 She fear'd, and listened to confirm her fears ;
 One breath sufficed, and shook her reflux soul.
 Smiting, with simulated smile constrain'd,
 Her beauteous bosom, “ O perfidious man,
 O cruel foe ! ” she twice and thrice exclaim'd,
 “ O my companions, equal-aged ! my throne !
 My people ! O how wretched to presage
 This day ! how tenfold wretched to endure ! ”

She ceast, and instantly the palace rang
 With gratulation roaring into rage ; 160
 'Twas her own people. “ Health to Gebir ! health
 To our compatriot subjects ! to our queen
 Health and unfaded youth ten thousand years ! ”
 Then went the victims forward crown'd with flowers,
 Crown'd were tame crocodiles, and boys white-robed
 Guided their creaking crests across the stream.
 In gilded barges went the female train,
 And, hearing others ripple near, undrew
 The veil of sea-green awning : if they found

Whom they desired, how pleasant was the breeze ! 170
 If not, the frightful water forced a sigh.
 Sweet airs of music ruled the rowing palms,
 Now rose they glistening and aslant reclined,
 Now they descended and with one consent
 Plunging, seem'd swift each other to pursue,
 And now to tremble wearied o'er the wave.
 Beyond and in the suburbs might be seen
 Crowds of all ages : here in triumph past
 Not without pomp, tho' rais'd with rude device,
 The monarch and Charoba ; there a throng 180
 Shone out in sunny whiteness o'er the reeds :
 Nor could luxuriant youth, or lapsing age
 Propt by the corner of the nearest street,
 With aching eyes and tottering knees intent,
 Loose leathery neck and wormlike lip outstretcht,
 Fix long the ken upon one form, so swift
 Thro' the gay vestures fluttering on the bank,
 And thro' the bright-eyed waters dancing round,
 Wove they their wanton wiles and disappear'd. 190
 Meantime, with pomp august and solemn, borne
 On four white camels tinkling plates of gold,
 Heralds before and Ethiop slaves behind,
 Each with the sign of office in his hand,
 Each on his brow the sacred stamp of years,
 The four ambassadors of peace proceed.
 Rich carpets bear they, corn and generous wine,
 The Syrian olive's cheerful gift they bear,
 With stubborn goats that eye the mountain-top
 Askance, and riot with reluctant horn, 200
 And steeds and stately camels in their train.
 The king, who sat before his tent, descried
 The dust rise reddened from the setting sun :
 Thro' all the plains below the Gadite men
 Were resting from their labour : some surveyed
 The spacious site ere yet obstructed ; walls
 Already, soon will roofs have interposed ;
 Some ate their frugal viands on the steps
 Contented ; some, remembering home, prefer 210
 The cot's bare rafters o'er the gilded dome,
 And sing (for often sighs too end in song)
 " In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose
 To the rough ocean and red restless sands !"
 Where are the woodland voices that increase
 Along the unseen path on festal days,
 When lay the dry and outcast arbutus

On the fane-step, and the first privet-flowers
 Threw their white light upon the vernal shrine ?
 Some heedless trip along with hasty step 220
 Whistling, and fix too soon on their abodes ;
 Haply and one among them with his spear
 Measures the lintel, if so great its highth
 As will receive him with his helm unlower'd.

But silence went throughout, e'en thoughts were husht,
 When to full view of navy and of camp
 Now first expanded the bare-headed train.
 Majestic unpresuming, unappall'd,
 Onward they marcht, and neither to the right
 Nor to the left, tho' there the city stood, 230
 Turn'd they their sober eyes ; and now they reacht
 Within a few steep paces of ascent
 The lone pavilion of the Iberian king :
 He saw them, he awaited them, he rose,
 He hail'd them, " Peace be with you : " they replied
 " King of the western world, be with you peace."

FIFTH BOOK.

ONCE a fair city, courted then by kings,
 Mistress of nations, throng'd by palaces,
 Raising her head o'er destiny, her face
 Glowing with pleasure and with palms refresh't,
 Now pointed at by Wisdom or by Wealth,
 Bereft of beauty, bare of ornament,
 Stood in the wilderness of woe, Masar.
 Ere far advancing, all appear'd a plain,
 Treacherous and fearful mountains, far advanced.
 Her glory so gone down, at human step 10
 The fierce hyena frighted from the walls
 Bristled his rising back, his teeth unsheathed,
 Drew the long growl and with slow foot retired.
 Yet were remaining some of ancient race,
 And ancient arts were now their sole delight.
 With Time's first sickle they had markt the hour
 When at their incantation would the Moon
 Start back, and shuddering shed blue blasted light.
 The rifted rays they gather'd, and immerst 20
 In potent portion of that wondrous wave,
 Which, hearing rescued Israel, stood erect,
 And led her armies thro' his crystal gates,
 Hither (none shared her way, her counsel none)
 Hied the Masarian Dalica : 'twas night,

And the still breeze fell languid on the waste.
 She, tired with journey long and ardent thoughts,
 Stopt ; and before the city she descried
 A female form emerge above the sands :
 Intent she fixt her eyes, and on herself
 Relying, with fresh vigour bent her way ; 30
 Nor disappear'd the woman ; but exclaim'd,
 (One hand retaining tight her folded vest)
 " Stranger ! who loathest life, there lies Masar.
 Begone, nor tarry longer, or ere morn
 The cormorant in his solitary haunt
 Of insulated rock or sounding cove
 Stands on thy bleached bones and screams for prey.
 My lips can scatter them o'er every sea
 Under the rising and the setting sun,
 So shrivel'd in one breath as all the sands 40
 We tread on, could not in a hundred years.
 Wretched who die nor raise their sepulchre !
 Therefore begone." But Dalica unaw'd,
 (Tho' in her wither'd but still firm right-hand,
 Held up with imprecations hoarse and deep,
 Glimmer'd her brazen sickle, and enclosed
 Within its figured curve the fading moon)
 Spake thus aloud. " By yon bright orb of Heaven,
 In that most sacred moment when her beam
 (Guided first thither by the forked shaft,) 50
 Strikes thro' the crevice of Arishtah's tower . . ."
 " Sayst thou ? " astonisht cried the sorceress,
 " Woman of outer darkness, fiend of death,
 From what inhuman cave, what dire abyss,
 Hast thou invisible that spell o'erheard ?
 What potent hand hath toucht thy quicken'd corse,
 What song dissolv'd thy cerements ? who unclosed
 Those faded eyes and fill'd them from the stars ?
 But if with inextinguish'd light of life
 Thou breathest, soul and body unamerst, 60
 Then whence that invocation ? who hath dared
 Those hallow'd words, divulging, to profane ?"
 Dalica cried, " To heaven not earth address
 Prayers for protection can not be profane."
 Here the pale sorceress turn'd her face aside
 Wildly, and mutter'd to herself amazed,
 " I dread her who, alone at such an hour,
 Can speak so strangely, who can thus combine
 The words of reason with our gifted rites,
 Yet will I speak once more. If thou hast seen 70

The city of Charoba, hast thou markt
The steps of Dalica ? ”

“ What then ? ”

“ The tongue
Of Dalica has then our rites divulged.”

“ Whose rites ? ”

“ Her mother’s.”

“ Never.”

“ One would think,
Presumptuous, thou wert Dalica.”

“ I am ;

Woman ! and who art thou ? ”

With close embrace,
Clung the Masarian round her neck, and cried,
“ Art thou then not my sister ? ah ! I fear
The golden lamps and jewels of a court
Deprive thine eyes of strength and purity :
O Dalica ! mine watch the waning moon,
For ever patient in our mother’s art,
And rest on Heaven suspended, where the founts
Of Wisdom rise, where sound the wings of Power ;
Studies intense of strong and stern delight !
And thou too, Dalica, so many years
Wean’d from the bosom of thy native land,
Returnest back and seekest true repose.
O what more pleasant than the short-breath’d sigh
When, laying down your burthen at the gate
And dizzy with long wandering, you embrace
The cool and quiet of a homespun bed.”

“ Alas ! ” said Dalica, “ tho’ all commend
This choice, and many meet with no controul,
Yet none pursue it ! Age by care opprest
Feels for the couch and drops into the grave.
The tranquil scene lies further still from Youth :
Frenzied Ambition and desponding Love
Consume Youth’s fairest flowers ; compared with Youth
Age has a something like repose.

Myrthyr, I seek not here a boundary
Like the horizon, which, as you advance,
Keeping its form and colour, yet recedes :
But mind my errand, and my suit perform.

“ Twelve years ago Charoba first could speak :
If her indulgent father askt her name,
She would indulge him too, and would reply
What ? why, Charoba ! rais’d with sweet surprise,
And proud to shine a teacher in her turn.

Show her the graven sceptre ; what its use ?
 'Twas to beat dogs with, and to gather flies. 110
 She thought the crown a plaything to amuse
 Herself, and not the people, for she thought
 Who mimick infant words might infant toys :
 But while she watcht grave elders look with awe
 On such a bauble, she withheld her breath ;
 She was afraid her parents should suspect
 They had caught childhood from her in a kiss ;
 She blusht for shame, and fear'd ; for she believ'd.
 Yet was not courage wanting in the child.
 No ; I have often seen her with both hands 120
 Shake a dry crocodile of equal highth,
 And listen to the shells within the scales,
 And fancy there was life, and yet apply
 The jagged jaws wide-open to her ear.
 Past are three summers since she first beheld
 The ocean ; all around the child await
 Some exclamation of amazement here :
 She coldly said, her long-lasht eyes abased,
Is this the mighty ocean ? is this all !
 That wondrous soul Charoba once possest, 130
 Capacious then as earth or heaven could hold,
 Soul discontented with capacity,
 Is gone, (I fear) for ever. Need I say
 She was enchanted by the wicked spells
 Of Gebir, whom with lust of power inflamed
 The western winds have landed on our coast.
 I since have watcht her in each lone retreat,
 Have heard her sigh and soften out the name,
 Then would she change it for Egyptian sounds
 More sweet, and seem to taste them on her lips, 140
 Then loathe them ; *Gebir, Gebir* still return'd.
 Who would repine, of reason not bereft !
 For soon the sunny stream of Youth runs down,
 And not a gadfly streaks the lake beyond.
 Lone in the gardens, on her gather'd vest
 How gently would her languid arm recline !
 How often have I seen her kiss a flower,
 And on cool mosses press her glowing cheek !
 Nor was the stranger free from pangs himself.
 Whether by spell imperfect, or, while brew'd, 150
 The swelling herbs infected him with foam,
 Oft have the shepherds met him wandering
 Thro' unfrequented paths, oft overheard
 Deep groans, oft started from soliloquies,

Which they believe assuredly were meant
 For spirits who attended him unseen.
 But when from his illuded eyes retired
 That figure Fancy fondly chose to raise,
 He claspt the vacant air and stood and gazed ;
 Then owning it was folly, strange to tell, 100
 Burst into peals of laughter at his woes ;
 Next, when his passion had subsided, went
 Where from a cistern, green and ruin'd, ooz'd
 A little rill, soon lost ; there gather'd he
 Violets, and harebells of a sister bloom,
 Twining complacently their tender stems
 With plants of kindest pliability.
 These for a garland woven, for a crown
 He platted pithy rushes, and ere dusk
 The grass was whiten'd with their roots nipt off. 170
 These threw he, finish't, in the little rill
 And stood surveying them with steady smile :
 But such a smile as that of Gebir bids
 To Comfort a defiance, to Despair
 A welcome, at whatever hour she please.
 Had I observ'd him I had pitied him,
 I have observed Charoba : I have askt
 If she loved Gebir. *Love him !* she exclaim'd
 With such a start of terror, such a flush
 Of anger, *I love Gebir ? I in love ?* 180
 And lookt so piteous, so impatient lookt . . .
 And burst, before I answered, into tears.
 Then saw I, plainly saw I, 'twas not love ;
 For such her natural temper, what she likes
 She speaks it out, or rather she commands :
 And could Charoba say with greater ease
Bring me a water-melon from the Nile,
 Than, if she lov'd him, *Bring me him I love.*
 Therefore the death of Gebir is resolv'd."

"Resolv'd indeed," cried Myrthyr, nought surprised, 190
 "Precious my arts ! I could without remorse
 Kill, tho' I hold thee dearer than the day,
 E'en thee thyself, to exercise my arts.
 Look yonder ! mark yon pomp of funeral !
 Is this from fortune or from favouring stars ?
 Dalica, look thou yonder, what a train !
 What weeping ! O what luxury ! come, haste,
 Gather me quickly up these herbs I dropt,
 And then away . . . hush ! I must unobserv'd
 From those two maiden sisters pull the spleen : 200

Dissemblers ! how invidious they surround
 The virgin's tomb, where all but virgins weep."
 "Nay, hear me first," cried Dalica, "'tis hard
 To perish to attend a foreign king."

"Perish ! and may not then mine eye alone
 Draw out the venom-drop, and yet remain
 Enough ? the portion can not be perceiv'd."
 Away she hasten'd with it to her home,
 And, sprinkling thrice fresh sulphur o'er the hearth,
 Took up a spindle with malignant smile, 210
 And pointed to a woof, nor spake a word ;
 'Twas a dark purple, and its dye was dread.

Plunged in a lonely house, to her unknown,
 Now Dalica first trembled : o'er the roof
 Wander'd her haggard eyes . . 'twas some relief . .
 The massy stones, tho' hewn most roughly, show'd
 The hand of man had once at least been there :
 But from this object sinking back amazed,
 Her bosom lost all consciousness, and shook
 As if suspended in unbounded space. 220

Her thus entranced the sister's voice recall'd,
 "Behold it here ! dyed once again, 'tis done."
 Dalica stept, and felt beneath her feet
 The slippery floor, with moulder'd dust bestrewn :
 But Myrthyr seiz'd with bare bold-sinew'd arm
 The grey cerastes, writhing from her grasp,
 And twisted off his horn, nor fear'd to squeeze
 The viscous poison from his glowing gums.
 Nor wanted there the root of stunted shrub
 Which he lays ragged, hanging o'er the sands, 230
 And whence the weapons of his wrath are death ;
 Nor the blue urchin that with clammy fin
 Holds down the tossing vessel for the tides.

Together these her scient hand combined,
 And more she added, dared I mention more.
 Which done, with words most potent, thrice she dipt
 The reeking garb ; thrice waved it through the air :
 She ceast ; and suddenly the creeping wool
 Shrank up with crisped dryness in her hands :
 "Take this," she cried, "and Gebir is no more." 240

SIXTH BOOK.

Now to Aurora borne by dappled steeds
 The sacred gate of orient pearl and gold,
 Smitten with Lucifer's light silver wand,
 Expanded slow to strains of harmony ;

The waves beneath in purpling rows, like doves
 Glancing with wanton coyness tow'rd their queen,
 Heav'd softly; thus the damsel's bosom heaves
 When from her sleeping lover's downy cheek,
 To which so warily her own she brings
 Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth 10
 Of coming kisses fann'd by playful Dreams.
 Ocean and earth and heaven was jubilee,
 For 'twas the morning pointed out by Fate
 When an immortal maid and mortal man
 Should share each other's nature knit in bliss.

The brave Iberians far the beach o'erspread
 Ere dawn, with distant awe; none hear the mew,
 None mark the curlew flapping o'er the field;
 Silence held all, and fond expectancy.
 Now suddenly the conch above the sea 20

Sounds, and goes sounding through the woods profound.
 They, where they hear the echo, turn their eyes,
 But nothing see they, save a purple mist
 Roll from the distant mountain down the shore:
 It rolls, it sails, it settles, it dissolves:

Now shines the Nymph to human eye reveal'd,
 And leads her Tamar timorous o'er the waves.
 Immortals crowding round congratulate
 The shepherd; he shrinks back, of breath bereft:

His vesture clinging closely round his limbs 30
 Unfelt, while they the whole fair form admire,
 He fears that he has lost it, then he fears
 The wave has mov'd it, most to look he fears.

Scarce the sweet-flowing music he imbibes,
 Or sees the peopled ocean; scarce he sees
 Spio with sparkling eyes, and Beroe
 Demure, and young Ione, less renown'd,
 Not less divine; mild-natured, Beauty form'd
 Her face, her heart Fidelity; for Gods
 Design'd, a mortal too Ione lov'd.

These were the Nymphs elected for the hour 40
 Of Hesperus and Hymen; these had strown
 The bridal bed, these tuned afresh the shells,
 Wiping the green that hoarsen'd them within;
 These wove the chaplets, and at night resolv'd
 To drive the dolphins from the wreathed door.
 Gebir survey'd the concourse from the tents,
 The Egyptian men around him; 'twas observ'd
 By those below how wistfully he lookt,
 From what attention with what earnestness

Now to his city, now to theirs, he waved
 His hand, and held it, while they spake, outspread. 50
 They tarried with him and they shared the feast;
 They stoop'd with trembling hand from heavy jars
 The wines of Gades gurgling in the bowl;
 Nor bent they homeward till the moon appear'd
 To hang midway betwixt the earth and skies.
 'Twas then that leaning o'er the boy belov'd,
 In Ocean's grot where Ocean was unheard,
 "Tamar!" the Nymph said gently, "come, awake!
 Enough to love, enough to sleep, is given, 60
 Haste we away." This Tamar deem'd deceit,
 Spoken so fondly, and he kist her lips,
 Nor blusht he then, for he was then unseen.
 But she arising bade the youth arise.
 "What cause to fly?" said Tamar; she replied
 "Ask none for flight, and feign none for delay."
 "O am I then deceived! or am I cast
 From dreams of pleasure to eternal sleep,
 And, when I cease to shudder, cease to be!" 70
 She held the downcast bridegroom to her breast,
 Lookt in his face and charm'd away his fears.
 She said not "wherefore have I then embraced
 You a poor shepherd, or at most a man,
 Myself a Nymph, that now I should deceive?"
 She said not . . . Tamar did, and was ashamed.
 Him overcome her serious voice bespake.
 "Grief favours all who bring the gift of tears:
 Mild at first sight he meets his votaries
 And casts no shadow as he comes along;
 But, after his embrace, the marble chills 80
 The pausing foot, the closing door sounds loud,
 The fiend in triumph strikes the roof, then falls
 The eye uplifted from his lurid shade.
 Tamar, depress thyself, and miseries
 Darken and widen: yes, proud-hearted man!
 The sea-bird rises as the billows rise;
 Nor otherwise when mountain floods descend
 Smiles the unsullied lotus glossy-hair'd;
 Thou, claiming all things, leanest on thy claim
 Till overwhelmed through incompiancy. 90
 Tamar, some silent tempest gathers round!
 "Round whom?" retorted Tamar, "thou describe
 The danger, I will dare it."
 "Who will dare
 What is unseen?"

“The man that is unblest.”
 “But wherefore thou? It threatens not thyself,
 Nor me, but Gebir and the Gadite host.”

“The more I know, the more a wretch am I,
 Groan’d deep the troubled youth, “still thou proceed.”

“Oh seek not destin’d evils to divine,
 Found out at last too soon! cease here the search,
 ’Tis vain, ’tis impious, ’tis no gift of mine : 100

I will impart far better, will impart
 What makes, when Winter comes, the Sun to rest
 So soon on Ocean’s bed his paler brow,
 And Night to tarry so at Spring’s return.
 And I will tell sometimes the fate of men
 Who loost from drooping neck the restless arm
 Adventurous, ere long nights had satisfied
 The sweet and honest avarice of love!

How whirlpools have absorb’d them, storms o’erwhelm’d, 110
 And how amid their struggles and their prayers
 The big wave blacken’d o’er the mouth supine :
 Then, when my Tamar trembles at the tale,
 Kissing his lips half-open with surprise,
 Glance from the gloomy story, and with glee
 Light on the fairer fables of the Gods.

“Thus we may sport at leisure when we go
 Where, lov’d by Neptune and the Naiad, lov’d
 By pensive Dryad pale, and Oread, 120
 The sprightly Nymph whom constant Zephyr woos,
 Rhine rolls his beryl-colour’d wave ; than Rhine
 What river from the mountains ever came
 More stately? most the simple crown adorns
 Of rushes and of willows intertwined
 With here and there a flower : his lofty brow
 Shaded with vines and mistletoe and oak
 He rears, and mystic bards his fame resound.
 Or gliding opposite, th’ Illyrian gulf
 Will harbour us from ill.” While thus she spake 130
 She toucht his eyelashes with libant lip
 And breath’d ambrosial odours, o’er his cheek
 Celestial warmth suffusing : grief disperst,
 And strength and pleasure beam’d upon his brow.
 Then pointed she before him : first arose
 To his astonisht and delighted view
 The sacred isle that shrines the queen of love.
 It stood so near him, so acute each sense,
 That not the symphony of lutes alone
 Or coo serene or billing strife of doves,

But murmurs, whispers, nay the very sighs 140
 Which he himself had utter'd once, he heard.
 Next, but long after and far off, appear
 The cloudlike cliffs and thousand towers of Crete,
 And further to the right the Cyclades ;
 Phœbus had rais'd and fixt them, to surround
 His native Delos and ærial fane.
 He saw the land of Pelops, host of Gods,
 Saw the steep ridge where Corinth after stood
 Beckoning the serious with the smiling Arts
 Into her sunbright bay ; unborn the maid 150
 That to assure the bent-up hand unskill'd
 Lookt off, but oftener fearing who might wake.
 He heard the voice of rivers ; he descried
 Pindan Peneüs and the slender Nymphs
 That tread his banks but fear the thundering tide ;
 These, and Amphrysos and Apidanos
 And poplar-crown'd Sperchios, and, reclined
 On restless rocks, Enipeus, where the winds
 Scatter'd above the weeds his hoary hair.
 Then, with Pirenè and with Panopè, 160
 Evenos, troubled from paternal tears,
 And last was Acheloös, king of isles.
 Zacynthos here, above rose Ithaca,
 Like a blue bubble floating in the bay.
 Far onward to the left a glimmering light
 Glanced out oblique, nor vanisht ; he inquired
 Whence that arose ; his consort thus replied.
 " Behold the vast Eridanus ! ere long
 We may again behold him and rejoice.
 Of noble rivers none with mightier force 170
 Rolls his unwearied torrent to the main."
 And now Sicilian Ætna rose to view :
 Darkness with light more horrid she confounds,
 Baffles the breath and dims the sight of day.
 Tamar grew giddy with astonishment
 And, looking up, held fast the bridal vest ;
 He heard the roar above him, heard the roar
 Beneath, and felt it too, as he beheld,
 Hurl, from Earth's base, rocks, mountains, to the skies.
 Meanwhile the Nymph had fixt her eyes beyond, 180
 As seeing somewhat, not intent on aught :
 He, more amazed than ever, then exclaim'd
 " Is there another flaming isle ? or this
 Illusion, thus past over unobserved ?"
 " Look yonder," cried the Nymph, without reply,

"Look yonder!" Tamar lookt, and saw afar
 Where the waves whitened on the desert shore.
 When from amid grey ocean first he caught
 The highths of Calpe, sadden'd he exclaim'd,
 "Rock of Iberia! fixt by Jove, and hung
 With all his thunder-bearing clouds, I hail
 Thy ridges rough and cheerless! what tho' Spring
 Nor kiss thy brow nor cool it with a flower,
 Yet will I hail thee, hail thy flinty couch
 Where Valour and where Virtue have reposed."
 The Nymph said, sweetly smiling, "Fickle Man
 Would not be happy could he not regret;
 And I confess how, looking back, a thought
 Has toucht and tuned or rather thrill'd my heart,
 Too soft for sorrow and too strong for joy;
 Fond foolish maid! 'twas with mine own accord
 It sooth'd me, shook me, melted, drown'd, in tears.
 But weep not thou; what cause hast thou to weep?
 Would'st thou thy country? would'st those caves abhorr'd,
 Dungeons and portals that exclude the day?
 Gebir, though generous, just, humane, inhaled
 Rank venom from these mansions. Rest, O king,
 In Egypt thou! nor, Tamar! pant for sway.
 With horrid chorus, Pain, Diseases, Death,
 Stamp on the slippery pavement of the proud,
 And ring their sounding emptiness through earth.
 Possess the ocean, me, thyself, and peace."
 And now the chariot of the Sun descends,
 The waves rush hurried from his foaming steeds,
 Smoke issues from their nostrils at the gate,
 Which, when they enter, with huge golden bar
 Atlas and Calpè close across the sea.

SEVENTH BOOK.

WHAT mortal first by adverse fate assail'd,
 Trampled by tyranny or scofft by scorn,
 Stung by remorse or wrung by poverty,
 Bade with fond sigh his native land farewell?
 Wretched! but tenfold wretched who resolv'd
 Against the waves to plunge the expatriate keel
 Deep with the richest harvest of his land!

Driven with that weak blast which Winter leaves
 Closing his palace-gates on Caucasus,
 Oft hath a berry risen forth a shade;
 From the same parent plant another lies

Deaf to the daily call of weary hind ;
 Zephyrs pass by and laugh at his distress.
 By every lake's and every river's side
 The Nymphs and Naiads teach equality ;
 In voices gently querulous they ask,
 " Who would with aching head and toiling arms
 Bear the full pitcher to the stream far off ?
 Who would, of power intent on high emprise,
 Deem less the praise to fill the vacant gulf 20
 Than raise Charybdis upon Ætna's brow ? "
 Amid her darkest caverns most retired,
 Nature calls forth her filial elements
 To close around and crush that monster *Void* :
 Fire, springing-fierce from his resplendent throne,
 And Water, dashing the devoted wretch
 Woundless and whole with iron-colour'd mace,
 Or whirling headlong in his war-belt's fold.
 Mark well the lesson, man ! and spare thy kind.
 Go, from their midnight darkness wake the woods, 30
 Woo the lone forest in her last retreat ;
 Many still bend their beauteous heads unblest
 And sigh aloud for elemental man.
 Thro' palaces and porches evil eyes
 Light upon e'en the wretched, who have fled
 The house of bondage or the house of birth ;
 Suspicions, murmurs, treacheries, taunts, retorts,
 Attend the brighter banners that invade,
 And the first horn of hunter, pale with want,
 Sounds to the chase, the second sounds to war. 40
 The long-awaited day at last arrived
 When, linkt together by the seven-armed Nile,
 Egypt with proud Iberia should unite.
 Here the Tartessian, there the Gadite tents
 Rang with impatient pleasure : here engaged
 Woody Nebrissa's quiver-bearing crew,
 Contending warm with amicable skill,
 While they of Durius raced along the beach
 And scatter'd mud and jeers on all behind.
 The strength of Bætis too removed the helm 50
 And stript the corslet off, and stauncht the foot
 Against the mossy maple, while they tore
 Their quivering lances from the hissing wound.
 Others push forth the prows of their compeers,
 And the wave, parted by the pouncing beak,
 Swells up the sides and closes far astern :
 The silent oars now dip their level wings,

And weary with strong stroke the whitening waves.
 Others, afraid of tardiness, return :
 Now, entering the still harbour, every surge 60
 Runs with a louder murmur up their keel,
 And the slack cordage rattles round the mast.
 Sleepless with pleasure and expiring fears
 Had Gebir risen ere the break of dawn,
 And o'er the plains appointed for the feast
 Hurried with ardent step : the swains admired
 What so transversely could have swept the dews.
 For never long one path had Gebir trod,
 Nor long, unheeding man, one pace preserv'd.
 Not thus Charoba : she despair'd the day ; 70
 The day was present ; true ; yet she despair'd.
 In the too tender and once tortured heart
 Doubts gather strength from habit, like disease ;
 Fears, like the needle verging to the pole,
 Tremble and tremble into certainty.
 How often, when her maids with merry voice
 Call'd her, and told the sleepless queen 'twas morn,
 How often would she feign some fresh delay,
 And tell 'em (though they saw) that she arose.
 Next to her chamber, closed by cedar doors, 80
 A bath of purest marble, purest wave,
 On its fair surface bore its pavement high :
 Arabian gold enchased the crystal roof,
 With fluttering boys adorn'd and girls unrobed ;
 These, when you touch the quiet water, start
 From their aërial sunny arch, and pant
 Entangled mid each other's flowery wreaths,
 And each pursuing is in turn pursued.
 Here came at last, as ever wont at morn, 90
 Charoba : long she lingered at the brink,
 Often she sigh'd, and, naked as she was,
 Sate down, and leaning on the couch's edge,
 On the soft inward pillow of her arm
 Rested her burning cheek : she moved her eyes ;
 She blusht ; and blushing plunged into the wave.
 Now brazen chariots thunder through each street,
 And neighing steeds paw proudly from delay.
 While o'er the palace breathes the dulcimer,
 Lute, and aspiring harp, and lisp'ing reed,
 Loud rush the trumpets bursting through the throng 100
 And urge the high-shoulder'd vulgar ; now are heard
 Curses and quarrels and constricted blows,
 Threats and defiance and suburban war.

Hark! the reiterated clangour sounds!
 Now murmurs, like the sea or like the storm
 Or like the flames on forests, move and mount
 From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll,
 Till all the people is one vast applause.

Yes, 'tis herself, Charoba. Now the strife
 To see again a form so often seen.

110

Feel they some partial pang, some secret void,
 Some doubt of feasting those fond eyes again?
 Panting imbibe they that refreshing sight
 To reproduce in hour of bitterness?

She goes, the king awaits her from the camp:
 Him she descried, and trembled ere he reacht
 Her car, but shuddered paler at his voice.

So the pale silver at the festive board
 Grows paler fill'd afresh and dew'd with wine;
 So seems the tenderest herbage of the spring
 To whiten, bending from a balmy gale.

120

The beauteous queen alighting he received,
 And sigh'd to loose her from his arms; she hung
 A little longer on them through her fears.

Her maidens follow'd her; and one that watcht,
 One that had call'd her in the morn, observ'd
 How virgin passion with unfuel'd flame
 Burns into whiteness, while the blushing cheek
 Imagination heats and shame imbues.

130

Between both nations drawn in ranks they pass:

The priests, with linen ephods, linen robes,
 Attend their steps, some follow, some precede,
 Where clothed with purple intertwined with gold
 Two lofty thrones commanded land and main.

Behind and near them numerous were the tents
 As freckled clouds o'erfloat our vernal skies,
 Numerous as wander in warm moonlight nights
 Along Meänder's or Caſter's marsh

Swans pliant-neckt and village storks revered.
 Throughout each nation moved the hum confused,
 Like that from myriad wings o'er Scythian cups
 Of frothy milk, concreted soon with blood.

140

Throughout the fields the savoury smoke ascends,
 And boughs and branches shade the hides unbrought.
 Some roll the flowery turf into a seat,

And others press the helmet. Now resounds
 The signal! queen and monarch mount the thrones.
 The brazen clarion hoarsens: many leagues
 Above them, many to the south, the heron

Rising with hurried croak and throat outstretch,
Ploughs up the silvering surface of her plain.

150

Tottering with age's zeal and mischief's haste
Now was discover'd Dalica ; she reacht
The throne, she lean'd against the pedestal,
And now ascending stood before the king.
Prayers for his health and safety she preferr'd,
And o'er his head and o'er his feet she threw
Myrrh, nard, and cassia, from three golden urns ;
His robe of native woof she next removed,
And round his shoulders drew the garb accurst,
And bow'd her head, departing : soon the queen
Saw the blood mantle in his manly cheek,
And fear'd, and faltering sought her lost replies,
And blest the silence that she wisht were broke.
Alas, unconscious maiden ! night shall close,
And love and sovranity and life dissolve,
And Egypt be one desert drencht in blood.

160

When thunder overhangs the fountain-head,
Losing its wonted freshness every stream
Grows turbid, grows with sickly warmth suffused :
Thus were the brave Iberians when they saw
The king of nations from his throne descend.
Scarcely, with pace uneven, knees unnerv'd,
Reacht he the waters : in his troubled ear
They sounded murmuring drearily ; they rose
Wild, in strange colours, to his parching eyes ;
They seem'd to rush around him, seem'd to lift
From the receding earth his helpless feet.
He fell : Charoba shriekt aloud ; she ran ;
Frantic with fears and fondness, mazed with woe,
Nothing but Gebir dying she beheld.

170

The turban that betray'd its golden charge
Within, the veil that down her shoulder hung,
All fallen at her feet ! the furthest wave
Creeping with silent progress up the sand,
Glided through all, and rais'd their hollow folds.
In vain they bore him to the sea, in vain
Rubb'd they his temples with the briny warmth ;
He struggled from them, strong with agony,
He rose half-up, he fell again, he cried
" Charoba ! O Charoba ! " She embraced
His neck, and raising on her knee one arm,
Sigh'd when it moved not, when it fell she shriekt,
And clasping loud both hands above her head,
She call'd on Gebir, call'd on earth, on heaven.

180

190

" Who will believe me ? what shall I protest ?
 How innocent, thus wretched ? God of Gods,
 Strike me . . . who most offend thee most defy . . .
 Charoba most offends thee : strike me, hurl
 From this accursed land, this faithless throne. 200
 O Dalica ! see here the royal feast !
 See here the gorgeous robe ! you little thought
 How have the demons dyed that robe with death.
 Where are ye, dear fond parents ! when ye heard
 My feet in childhood pat the palace-floor,
 Ye started forth and kist away surprise :
 Will ye now meet me ? how, and where, and when ?
 And must I fill your bosom with my tears,
 And, what I never have done, with your own ?
 Why have the Gods thus punisht me ? what harm 210
 Have ever I done them ? have I profaned
 Their temples, askt too little, or too much ?
 Proud if they granted, griev'd if they withheld ?
 O mother ! stand between your child and them !
 Appease them, soothe them, soften their revenge,
 Melt them to pity with maternal tears.
 Alas, but if you can not ! they themselves
 Will then want pity rather than your child.
 O Gebir ! best of monarchs, best of men,
 What realm hath ever thy firm even hand 220
 Or lost by feebleness or held by force ?
 Behold thy cares and perils how repaid !
 Behold the festive day, the nuptial hour !"
 Thus raved Charoba ; horror, grief, amaze,
 Pervaded all the host ; all eyes were fixt ;
 All stricken motionless and mute : the feast
 Was like the feast of Cepheus, when the sword
 Of Phineus, white with wonder, shook restrain'd,
 And the hilt rattled in his marble hand.
 She heard not, saw not, every sense was gone ; 230
 One passion banisht all ; dominion, praise,
 The world itself, was nothing. Senseless man !
 What would thy fancy figure now from worlds ?
 There is no world to those that grieve and love.
 She hung upon his bosom, prest his lips,
 Breath'd, and would feign it his that she resorb'd.
 She chafed the feathery softness of his veins,
 That swell'd out black, like tendrils round their vaso
 After libation : lo ! he moves ! he groans !
 He seems to struggle from the grasp of death ! 240
 Charoba shriekt and fell away, her hand

Still clasping his, a sudden blush o'erspread
 Her pallid humid cheek, and disappear'd.
 'Twas not the blush of shame ; what shame has woe ?
 'Twas not the genuine ray of hope ; it flasht
 With shuddering glimmer through unscatter'd clouds,
 It flasht from passions rapidly opposed.

Never so eager, when the world was waves,
 Stood the less daughter of the ark, and tried
 (Innocent this temptation !) to recall
 With folded vest and casting arm the dove ;
 Never so fearful, when amid the vines
 Rattled the hail, and when the light of heaven
 Closed, since the wreck of Nature, first eclipt,
 As she was eager for his life's return,
 As she was fearful how his groans might end.
 They ended : cold and languid calm succeeds ;
 His eyes have lost their lustre, but his voice
 Is not unheard, though short : he spake these words.

“ And weepst thou, Charoba ! shedding tears
 More precious than the jewels that surround
 The neck of kings entomb'd ! then weep, fair queen.
 At once thy pity and my pangs assuage.

Ah ! what is grandeur ? glory ? they are past !
 When nothing else, not life itself, remains,
 Still the fond mourner may be call'd our own.
 Should I complain of Fortune ? how she errs,
 Scattering her bounty upon barren ground,
 Slow to allay the lingering thirst of teal ?
 Fortune, 'tis true, may err, may hesitate,
 Death follows close, nor hesitates, nor errs.
 I feel the stroke ! I die ! ” He would extend
 His dying arm : it fell upon his breast ;
 Cold sweat and shivering ran o'er every limb,
 His eyes grew stiff, he struggled, and expired.

• 4

LANDOR'S POEMS.



ACTS AND SCENES,

OR

DIALOGUES IN VERSE.

ACTS AND SCENES.

COUNT JULIAN.

None of these poems of a dramatic form were offered to the stage, being no better than *Imaginary Conversations* in metre.—W. S. L.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT JULIAN. RODERIGO, *King of Spain*. OPAS, *Metropolitan of Seville*. SISABERT, *betrothed to COVILLA*. MUZA, *Prince of Mauritania*. ABDALAZIS, *son of MUZA*. TARIK, *Moorish Chieftain*. COVILLA,* *daughter of JULIAN*. EGILONA, *wife of RODERIGO*. HERNANDO, OSMA, RAMIRO, &c., *Officers*.

FIRST ACT: FIRST SCENE.

Camp of Julian.

OPAS. JULIAN.

Opas. See her, Count Julian: if thou lovest God,
See thy lost child.

Julian. I have avenged me, Opas,
More than enough: I only sought to hurl
The brand of war on one detested head,
And die upon his ruin. O my country!
O lost to honour, to thyself, to me,

* The daughter of Count Julian is usually called Florinda. The city of Covilla, it is reported, was named after her. Here is no improbability: there would be a gross one in deriving the word, as is also pretended, from *La Cava*. Cities, in adopting a name, bear it usually as a testimony of victories or as an augury of virtues. Small and obscure places occasionally receive what their neighbours throw against them; as *Puerto de la mala muger* in Murcia: but a generous people would affix no stigma to innocence and misfortune. It is remarkable that the most important era in Spanish history should be the most obscure. This is propitious to the poet, and above all to the tragedian. Few characters of such an era can be glaringly misrepresented, few facts offensively perverted.

Why on barbarian hands devolves thy cause,
Spoilers, blasphemers !

Opas. Is it thus, Don Julian,
When thy own offspring, that beloved child
For whom alone these very acts were done
By them and thee, when thy Covilla stands
An outcast and a suppliant at thy gate,
Why that still stubborn agony of soul,
Those struggles with the bars thyself imposed?
Is she not thine ? not dear to thee as ever ?

Julian. Father of mercies ! show me none, when'er
The wrongs she suffers cease to wring my heart,
Or I seek solace ever, but in death.

Opas. What wilt thou do then, too unhappy man ?

Julian. What have I done already ? All my peace
Has vanish ; my fair fame in aftertime
Will wear an alien and uncomely form,
Seen o'er the cities I have laid in dust,
Countrymen slaughtered, friends abjured !

Opas. And faith ?

Julian. Alone now left me, filling up in part
The narrow and waste interval of grief :
It promises that I shall see again
My own lost child.

Opas. Yes, at this very hour.

Julian. Till I have met the tyrant face to face,
And gain'd a conquest greater than the last,
Till he no longer rules one rood of Spain,
And not one Spaniard, not one enemy,
The least relenting, flags upon his flight,
Till we are equal in the eyes of men,
The humblest and most wretched of our kind,
No peace for me, no comfort, no . . . no child !

Opas. No pity for the thousands fatherless,
The thousands childless like thyself, nay more,
The thousands friendless, helpless, comfortless . . .
Such thou wilt make them, little thinking so,
Who now perhaps, round their first winter fire,
Banish, to talk of thee, the tales of old,
Shedding true honest tears for thee unknown :
Precious be these and sacred in thy sight,
Mingle them not with blood from hearts thus kind.
If only warlike spirits were evoked
By the war-demon, I would not complain,
Or dissolute and discontented men ;
But wherefore hurry down into the square

The neighbourly, saluting, warm-clad race,
 Who would not injure us, and can not serve ;
 Who, from their short and measured slumber risen,
 In the faint sunshine of their balconies,
 With a half-legend of a martyrdom
 And some weak wine and withered grapes before them,
 Note by their foot the wheel of melody
 That catches and rolls on the Sabbath dance.
 To drag the steady prop from failing age,
 Break the young stem that fondness twines around,
 Widen the solitude of lonely sighs,
 And scatter to the broad bleak wastes of day
 The ruins and the phantoms that replied,
 Ne'er be it thine.

Julian.

Arise, and save me, Spain :

FIRST ACT: SECOND SCENE.

MUZA enters.

Muza. Infidel chief, thou tarriest here too long,
 And art perhaps repining at the days
 Of nine continued victories o'er men
 Dear to thy soul, tho' reprobate and base.
 Away !

[*He retires.*

Julian. I follow. Could my bitterest foes
 Hear this ! ye Spaniards, this ! which I foreknew
 And yet encounter'd ; could they see your Julian
 Receiving orders from and answering
 These desperate and heaven-abandoned slaves,
 They might perceive some few external pangs,
 Some glimpses of the hell wherein I move,
 Who never have been fathers.

Opas. These are they
 To whom brave Spaniards must refer their wrongs !

Julian. Muza, that cruel and suspicious chief,
 Distrusts his friends more than his enemies,
 Me more than either ; fraud he loves and fears,
 And watches her still footfall day and night.

Opas. O Julian ! such a refuge ! such a race !

Julian. . . Calamities like mine alone implore.
 No virtues have redeem'd them from their bonds ;
 Wily ferocity, keen idleness,
 And the close cringes of ill-whispering want,
 Educate them to plunder and obey :
 Active to serve him best whom most they fear,

They show no mercy to the merciful,
And racks alone remind them of the name.

Opas. O everlasting curse for Spain and thee!

Julian. Spain should have vindicated then her wrongs
In mine, a Spaniard's and a soldier's wrongs.

Opas. Julian, are thine the only wrongs on earth?
And shall each Spaniard rather vindicate
Thine than his own? is there no Judge of all?
Shall mortal hand seize with impunity
The sword of vengeance from the armoury
Of the Most High? easy to wield, and starred
With glory it appears; but all the host
Of the archangels, should they strive at once,
Would never close again its widening blade.

Julian. He who provokes it hath so much to rue.
Where'er he turn, whether to earth or heaven,
He finds an enemy, or raises one.

Opas. I never yet have seen where long success
Hath followed him who warred upon his king.

Julian. Because the virtue that inflicts the stroke
Dies with him, and the rank ignoble heads
Of plundering faction soon unite again,
And prince-protected share the spoil at rest.

FIRST ACT: THIRD SCENE.

Guard announces a Herald. OPAS departs.

Guard. A messenger of peace is at the gate,
My lord, safe access, private audience,
And free return, he claims.

Julian. Conduct him in.

RODERIGO enters as a herald.

A messenger of peace! audacious man!
In what attire appearest thou? a herald's?
Under no garb can such a wretch be safe.

Roderigo. Thy violence and fancied wrongs I know,
And what thy sacrilegious hands would do,
O traitor and apostate!

Julian. What they would
They can not: thee of kingdom and of life
'Tis easy to despoil, thyself the traitor,
Thyself the violator of allegiance.
O would all-righteous Heaven they could restore
The joy of innocence, the calm of age,
The probity of manhood, pride of arms,

And confidence of honour! the august
 And holy laws trampled beneath thy feet,
 And Spain! O parent, I have lost thee too!
 Yes, thou wilt curse me in thy latter days,
 Me, thine avenger. I have fought her foe,
 Roderigo, I have gloried in her sons,
 Sublime in hardihood and piety:
 Her strength was mine: I, sailing by her cliffs,
 By promontory after promontory,
 Opening like flags along some castle-tower,
 Have sworn before the cross upon our mast
 Ne'er shall invader wave his standard there.

Roderigo. Yet there thou plantest it, false man, thyself.

Julian. Accursed he who makes me this reproach,
 And made it just! Had I been happy still,
 I had been blameless: I had died with glory
 Upon the walls of Ceuta.

Roderigo. Which thy treason
 Surrendered to the Infidel.

Julian. 'Tis hard
 And base to live beneath a conqueror;
 Yet, amid all this grief and infamy,
 'Twere something to have rusht upon the ranks
 In their advance; 'twere something to have stood
 Defeat, discomfiture, and, when around
 No beacon blazes, no far axle groans
 Thro' the wide plain, no sound of sustenance
 Or succour soothes the still-believing ear,
 To fight upon the last dismantled tower,
 And yield to valour, if we yield at all.
 But rather should my neck lie trampled down
 By every Saracen and Moor on earth,
 Than my own country see her laws o'erturn'd
 By those who should protect them. Sir, no prince
 Shall ruin Spain, and, least of all, her own.
 Is any just or glorious act in view,
 Your oaths forbid it: is your avarice,
 Or, if there be such, any viler passion
 To have its giddy range and to be gorged,
 It rises over all your sacraments,
 A hooded mystery, holier than they all.

Roderigo. Hear me, Don Julian; I have heard thy wrath
 Who am thy king, nor heard man's wrath before.

Julian. Thou shalt hear mine, for thou art not my king.

Roderigo. Knowest thou not the altered face of war?
 Xeres is ours; from every region round

True loyal Spaniards throng into our camp :
 Nay, thy own friends and thy own family,
 From the remotest provinces, advance
 To crush rebellion : Sisabert is come,
 Disclaiming thee and thine ; the Asturian hills
 Oppose to him their icy chains in vain ;
 But never wilt thou see him, never more,
 Unless in adverse war and deadly hate.

Julian. So lost to me ! so generous, so deceived ! I grieve to hear it.

Roderigo. Come, I offer grace,
 Honour, dominion : send away these slaves,
 Or leave them to our sword, and all beyond
 The distant Ebro to the towns of France
 Shall bless thy name and bend before thy throne.
 I will myself accompany thee, I,
 The king, will hail thee brother.

Julian. Ne'er shalt thou
 Henceforth be king : the nation in thy name
 May issue edicts, champions may command
 The vassal multitudes of marshal'd war,
 And the fierce charger shrink before the shouts,
 Lower'd as if earth had open'd at his feet,
 While thy mail'd semblance rises tow'rd the ranks,
 But God alone sees thee.

Roderigo. What hopest thou ?
 To conquer Spain, and rule a ravaged land ?
 To compass me around ? to murder me ?

Julian. No, Don Roderigo : swear thou, in the fight
 That thou wilt meet me, hand to hand, alone,
 That, if I ever save thee from a foe . . .

Roderigo. I swear what honour asks. First, to Covilla
 Do thou present my crown and dignity.

Julian. Darest thou offer any price for shame ?

Roderigo. Love and repentance.

Julian. Egilona lives ;
 And were she buried with her ancestors,
 Covilla should not be the gaze of men,
 Should not, despoil'd of honour, rule the free.

Roderigo. Stern man ! her virtues well deserve the throne.

Julian. And Egilona, what hath she deserv'd,
 The good, the lovely ?

Roderigo. But the realm in vain
 Hoped a succession.

Julian. Thou hast torn away
 The roots of royalty.

Roderigo. For her, for thee.

Julian. Blind insolence! base insincerity!
Power and renown no mortal ever shared
Who could retain or grasp them to himself:
And, for Covilla? patience! peace! for her?
She call upon her God, and outrage him
At his own altar! *she* repeat the vows
She violates in repeating! who abhors
Thee and thy crimes, and wants no crown of thine.
Force may compel the abhorrent soul, or want
Lash and pursue it to the public ways;
Virtue looks back and weeps, and may return
To these, but never near the abandon'd one
Who drags religion to adultery's feet,
And rears the altar higher for her sake.

Roderigo. Have then the Saracens possess thee quite?
And wilt thou never yield me thy consent?

Julian. Never.

Roderigo. So deep in guilt, in treachery!
Forced to acknowledge it! forced to avow
The traitor!

Julian. Not to thee, who reignest not,
But to a country ever dear to me,
And dearer now than ever! What we love
Is loveliest in departure! One I thought,
As every father thinks, the best of all,
Graceful and mild and sensible and chaste:
Now all these qualities of form and soul
Fade from before me, nor on any one
Can I repose, or be consoled by any.
And yet in this torn heart I love her more
Than I could love her when I dwelt on each,
Or claspt them all united, and thank God,
Without a wish beyond. Away, thou fiend!
O ignominy, last and worst of all!
I weep before thee . . . like a child . . . like mine . . .
And tell my woes, fount of them all! to thee!

FIRST ACT: FOURTH SCENE.

ABDALAZIS enters.

Abdalazis. Julian, to thee, the terror of the faithless,
I bring my father's order to prepare
For the bright day that crowns thy brave exploits.
Our enemy is at the very gate,
And art thou here, with women in thy train,

Crouching to gain admittance to their lord,
And mourning the unkindness of delay!

Julian (agitated, goes toward the door, and returns). I am prepared: Prince, judge not hastily.

Abdalasis. Whether I should not promise all they ask,
I too could hesitate, though earlier taught
The duty to obey, and should rejoice
To shelter in the universal storm
A frame so delicate, so full of fears,
So little used to outrage and to arms,
As one of these, so humble, so uncheer'd
At the gay pomp that smooths the track of war.
When she beheld me from afar dismount,
And heard my trumpet, she alone drew back,
And, as though doubtful of the help she seeks,
Shudder'd to see the jewels on my brow,
And turn'd her eyes away, and wept aloud.
The other stood awhile, and then advanced:
I would have spoken; but she waved her hand
And said, "Proceed, protect us, and avenge,
And be thou worthier of the crown thou wearest."
Hopeful and happy is indeed our cause,
When the most timid of the lovely hail
Stranger and foe.

Roderigo (unnoticed by Abdalasis). And shrink but to advance.

Abdalasis. Thou tremblest? whence, O Julian! whence this change?

Thou lovest still thy country.

Julian.

Abdalasis!

All men with human feelings love their country.
Not the highborn or wealthy man alone,
Who looks upon his children, each one led
By its gay handmaid from the high alcove,
And hears them once a-day; not only he
Who hath forgotten, when his guest inquires
The name of some far village all his own;
Whose rivers bound the province, and whose hills
Touch the last cloud upon the level sky:
No; better men still better love their country.
'Tis the old mansion of their earliest friends,
The chapel of their first and best devotions.
When violence or perfidy invades,
Or when unworthy lords hold wassail there,
And wiser heads are drooping round its moats,
At last they fix their steady and stiff eye
There, there alone, stand while the trumpet blows,

And view the hostile flames above its towers
Spire, with a bitter and severe delight.

Abdalasis (taking his hand). Thou feelest what thou speakest,
and thy Spain

Will ne'er be shelter'd from her fate by thee.
We, whom the Prophet sends o'er many lands,
Love none above another; Heaven assigns
Their fields and harvests to our valiant swords,
And 'tis enough: we love while we enjoy.
Whence is the man in that fantastic guise?
Suppliant? or herald? he who stalks about,
And once was even seated while we spoke:
For never came he with us o'er the sea.

Julian. He comes as herald.

Roderigo. Thou shalt know full soon,
Insulting Moor!

Abdalasis. He ill endures the grief
His country suffers: I will pardon him.
He lost his courage first, and then his mind;
His courage rushes back, his mind yet wanders.
The guest of heaven was piteous to these men,
And princes stoop to feed them in their courts.

FIRST ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

RODERIGO *is going*: MUZA *enters with EGILONA*:
RODERIGO *starts back*.

Musa (sternly to EGILONA). Enter, since 'tis the custom in this
land.

Egilona (passing MUZA, points to ABDALAZIS.) Is this our
future monarch, or art thou?

Julian. 'Tis Abdalazis, son of Muza, prince
Commanding Africa, from Abyla
To where Tunisian pilots bend the eye
O'er ruin'd temples in the glassy wave.
Till quiet times and ancient laws return
He comes to govern here.

Roderigo. To-morrow's dawn
Proves that.

Musa. What art thou?

Roderigo (drawing his sword). King.

Abdalasis.

Amazement!

Musa.

Treason!

Egilona. O horror!

Musa. Seize him.

Egilona. Spare him! fly to me!
Julian. Urge me not to protect a guest, a herald,
 The blasts of war roar over him unfelt.
Egilona. Ah fly, unhappy!
Roderigo. Fly! no, Egilona!
 Dost thou forgive me? dost thou love me? still?
Egilona. I hate, abominate, abhor thee . . . go,
 Or my own vengeance . . .
 RODERIGO (*takes JULIAN's hand; invites him to attack MUZA and*
ABDALAZIS.) Julian!
Julian. Hence, or die.

SECOND ACT: FIRST SCENE.

Camp of JULIAN.

JULIAN and COVILLA.

Julian. Obdurate? I am not as I appear.
 Weep, my beloved child! Covilla, weep
 Into my bosom; every drop be mine
 Of this most bitter soul-empoisoning cup:
 Into no other bosom than thy father's
 Canst thou or wouldst thou pour it.
Covilla. Cease, my lord,
 My father, angel of my youth, when all
 Was innocence and peace.
Julian. Arise, my love,
 Look up to heaven . . . where else are souls like thine!
 Mingle in sweet communion with its children,
 Trust in its providence, its retribution,
 And I will cease to mourn; for, O my child,
 These tears corrode, but thine assuage, the heart.
Covilla. And never shall I see my mother too,
 My own, my blessed mother?
Julian. Thou shalt see
 Her and thy brothers.
Covilla. No! I can not look
 On them, I can not meet their lovely eyes,
 I can not lift mine up from under theirs.
 We all were children when they went away;
 They now have fought hard battles, and are men,
 And camps and kings they know, and woes and crimes.
 Sir, will they never venture from the walls
 Into the plain? Remember, they are young,
 Hardy and emulous and hazardous,
 And who is left to guard them in the town?

Julian. Peace is throughout the land: the various tribes
Of that vast region sink at once to rest,
Like one wide wood when every wind lies hush.

Covilla. And war, in all its fury, roams o'er Spain!

Julian. Alas! and will for ages: crimes are loose
At which ensanguined War stands shuddering,
And calls for vengeance from the powers above,
Impatient of inflicting it himself.

Nature in these new horrors is aghast
At her own progeny, and knows them not.
I am the minister of wrath; the hands
That tremble at me, shall applaud me too,
And seal their condemnation.

Covilla. O kind father,
Pursue the guilty, but remember Spain.

Julian. Child, thou wert in thy nursery short time since,
And latterly hast past the vacant hour
Where the familiar voice of history
Is hardly known, however nigh, attuned
In softer accents to the sickened ear;
But thou hast heard, for nurses tell these tales,
Whether I drew my sword for Witiza
Abandoned by the people he betrayed,
Tho' brother to the woman who of all
Was ever dearest to this broken heart,
Till thou, my daughter, wert a prey to grief,
And a brave country brookt the wrongs I bore.
For I had seen Rusilla guide the steps
Of her Theodofred, when burning brass
Plunged its fierce fang into the fount of light,
And Witiza's the guilt! when, bent with age,
He knew the voice again, and told the name
Of those whose proffer'd fortunes had been laid
Before his throne, while happiness was there,
And strain'd the sightless nerve tow'rd where they stood,
At the forced memory of the very oaths
He heard renew'd from each, but heard afar,
For they were loud, and him the throng spurn'd off.

Covilla. Who were all these?

Julian. All who are seen to-day
On prancing steeds richly caparisoned
In loyal acclamation round Roderigo;
Their sons beside them, loving one another
Unfeignedly, thro' joy, while they themselves
In mutual homage mutual scorn suppress.
Their very walls and roofs are welcoming.

The king's approach, their storied tapestry
 Swells its rich arch for him triumphantly
 At every clarion blowing from below.

Covilla. Such wicked men will never leave his side.

Julian. For they are insects which see nought beyond
 Where they now crawl; whose changes are complete,
 Unless of habitation.

Covilla. Whither go
 Creatures unfit for better or for worse?

Julian. Some to the grave, where peace be with them! some
 Across the Pyrenean mountains far,
 Into the plains of France; suspicion there
 Will hang on every step from rich and poor,
 Grey quickly-glancing eyes will wrinkle round
 And courtesy will watch them, day and night.
 Shameless they are, yet will they blush amid
 A nation that ne'er blushes: some will drag
 The captive's chain, repair the shatter'd bark,
 Or heave it from a quicksand to the shore
 Among the marbles of the Lybian coast,
 Teach patience to the lion in his cage,
 And, by the order of a higher slave,
 Hold to the elephant their scanty fare
 To please the children while the parent sleeps.

Covilla. Spaniards? must they, dear father, lead such lives?

Julian. All are not Spaniards who draw breath in Spain,
 Those are, who live for her, who die for her,
 Who love her glory, and lament her fall.
 O may I too . . .

Covilla. But peacefully, and late,
 Live and die here!

Julian. I have, alas! myself
 Laid waste the hopes where my fond fancy stray'd,
 And view their ruins with unalter'd eyes.

Covilla. My mother will at last return to you.
 Might I once more, but . . . could I now? behold her.
 Tell her . . . ah me! what was my rash desire?
 No, never tell her these inhuman things,
 For they would waste her tender heart away
 As they waste mine; or tell when I have died,
 Only to show her that her every care
 Could not have saved, could not have comforted;
 That she herself, clasping me once again
 To her sad breast, had said, Covilla! go,
 Go, hide them in the bosom of thy God!
 Sweet mother! that far-distant voice I hear,

And, passing out of youth and out of life,
I would not turn at last, and disobey.

SECOND ACT: SECOND SCENE.

SISABERT *enters.*

Sisabert. Uncle, and is it true, say, can it be,
That thou art leader of these faithless Moors?
That thou impeachest thy own daughter's fame
Thro' the whole land, to seize upon the throne
By the permission of these recreant slaves?
What shall I call thee? art thou, speak Count Julian,
A father, or a soldier, or a man?

Julian. All, or this day had never seen me here.

Sisabert. O falsehood! worse than woman's!

Covilla. Once, my cousin,

Far gentler words were utter'd from your lips.
If you loved me, you loved my father first,
More justly and more steadily, ere love
Was passion and illusion and deceit.

Sisabert. I boast not that I never was deceived,
Covilla, which beyond all boasts were base,
Nor that I never loved; let this be thine.

Illusions! just to stop us, not delay,
Amuse, not occupy! Too true! when love
Scatters its brilliant foam, and passes on
To some fresh object in its natural course,
Widely and openly and wanderingly,
'Tis better: narrow it, and it pours its gloom
In one fierce cataract that stuns the soul.
Ye hate the wretch ye make so, while ye choose
Whoever knows you best and shuns you most.

Covilla. Shun *me* then: be beloved more and more.
Honour the hand that show'd you honour first,
Love . . . O my father! speak, proceed, persuade,
Your voice alone can utter it . . . another.

Sisabert. Ah lost Covilla! can a thirst of power
Alter thy heart thus to abandon mine,
And change my very nature at one blow?

Covilla. I told you, dearest Sisabert, 'twas *vain*
To urge me more, to question or confute.

Sisabert. I know it, for another wears the *CROWN*
Of Witiza my father; who succeeds
To king Roderigo will succeed to me.
Yet thy cold perfidy still calls me dear,

And o'er my aching temples breathes one gale
Of days departed to return no more.

Julian. Young man, avenge our cause.

Sisabert. What cause avenge ?

Covilla. If I was ever dear to you, hear me,
Not vengeance ; heaven will give that signal soon.
O Sisabert, the pangs I have endured
On your long absence . . .

Sisabert. Will be now consoled.

Thy father comes to mount my father's throne ;
But though I would not a usurper king,
I prize his valour and defend his crown :
No stranger and no traitor rules o'er me,
Or unchastised inveigles humble Spain.
Covilla, gavest thou no promises ?
Nor thou, Don Julian ? Seek not to reply.
Too well I know, too justly I despise,
Thy false excuse, thy coward effrontery ;
Yes, when thou gavest them across the sea,
An enemy wert thou to Mahomet,
And no appellant to his faith or leagues.

Julian. 'Tis well : a soldier hears throughout in silence.
I urge no answer : to those words, I fear,
Thy heart with sharp compunction will reply.

Sisabert (to COVILLA). Then I demand of thee, before thou reign,
Answer me . . . while I fought against the Frank
Who dared to sue thee ? blazon'd in the court,
Not trailed thro' darkness, were our nuptial bands ;
No ; Egilona joined our hands herself,
The peers applauded and the king approved.

Julian. Hast thou yet seen that king since thy return ?

Covilla. Father ! O Father !

Sisabert. I will not implore
Of him or thee what I have lost for ever.
These were not, when we parted, thy alarms ;
Far other, and far worthier of thy heart
Were they, which Sisabert could banish then.
Fear me not now, *Covilla* ! thou hast changed,
I am changed too. I lived but where thou livedst,
My very life was portion'd off from thine :
Upon the surface of thy happiness
Day after day I gazed, I doted, there
Was all I had, was all I coveted ;
So pure, serene, and boundless it appear'd :
Yet, for we told each other every thought,
Thou knowest well, if thou rememberest,

At times I fear'd ; as tho' some demon sent
 Suspicion without form into the world,
 To whisper unimaginal things.
 Then thy fond arguing banisht all but hope,
 Each wish and every feeling was with thine,
 Till I partook thy nature, and became
 Credulous and incredulous like thee.

We, who have met so alter'd, meet no more.
 Mountains and seas ! ye are not separation :
 Death ! thou dividest, but unitest too
 In everlasting peace and faith sincere.
 Confiding love ! where is thy resting-place ?
 Where is thy truth, Covilla ? where ? . . . Go, go . .
 I should believe thee and adore thee still.

[*Goos.*

Covilla. O Heaven ! support me, or desert me quite,
 And leave me lifeless this too trying hour !
 He thinks me faithless.

Julian. He must think thee so.

Covilla. O tell him, tell him all, when I am dead . .
 He will die too, and we shall meet again.

He will know all when these sad eyes are closed.

Ah can not he before ? must I appear

The vilest . . O just Heaven ! can it be thus ?

I am . . all earth resounds it . . lost, despised,

Anguish and shame unutterable seize me.

'Tis palpable, no phantom, no delusion,

No dream that wakens with o'erwhelming horror ;

Spaniard and Moor fight on this ground alone,

And tear the arrow from my bleeding breast

To pierce my father's, for alike they fear.

Julian. Invulnerable, unassailable
 Are we, alone perhaps of human kind,
 Nor life allures us more nor death alarms.

Covilla. Fallen, unpitied, unbeliev'd, unheard !

I should have died long earlier. Gracious God !

Desert me to my sufferings, but sustain

My faith in thee ! O hide me from the world,

And from yourself, my father, from your fondness,

That opened in this wilderness of woe

A source of tears . . it else had burst my heart,

Setting me free for ever : then perhaps

A cruel war had not divided Spain,

Had not o'erturn'd her cities and her altars,

Had not endanger'd you ! O haste afar

Ere the last dreadful conflict that decides

Whether we live beneath a foreign sway . .

Julian. Or under him whose tyranny brought down
The curse upon his people. O child! child!
Urge me no further, talk not of the war,
Remember not our country.

Covilla. Not remember!
What have the wretched else for consolation?
What else have they who pining feed their woe?
Can I, or should I, drive from memory
All that was dear and sacred? all the joys
Of innocence and peace? when no debate
Was in the convent, but what hymn, whose voice,
To whom among the blessed it arose,
Swelling so sweet; when rang the vesper-bell
And every finger ceast from the guitar,
And every tongue was silent through our land;
When, from remotest earth, friends met again,
Hung on each other's neck, and but embraced,
So sacred, still, and peaceful was the hour.
Now, in what climate of the wasted world,
Not unmolested long by the profane,
Can I pour forth in secrecy to God
My prayers and my repentance? where beside
Is the last solace of the parting soul?
Friends, brethren, parents, dear indeed, too dear
Are they, but somewhat yet the heart requires,
That it may leave them lighter and more blest.

Julian. Wide are the regions of our far-famed land:
Thou shalt arrive at her remotest bounds,
See her best people, choose some holiest house;
Whether where Castro from surrounding vines
Hears the hoarse ocean roar among his caves,
And, thro' the fissure in the green churchyard,
The wind wail loud the calmest summer day;
Or where Santona leans against the hill,
Hidden from sea and land by groves and bowers.

Covilla. O! for one moment in those pleasant scenes
Thou placest me, and lighter air I breathe:
Why could I not have rested, and heard on!
My voice dissolves the vision quite away,
Outcast from virtue, and from nature too!

Julian. Nature and virtue! they shall perish first.
God destined them for thee, and thee for them,
Inseparably and eternally!
The wisest and the best will prize thee most,
And solitudes and cities will contend
Which shall receive thee kindest. Sigh not so:

Violence and fraud will never penetrate
 Where piety and poverty retire,
 Intractable to them and valueless,
 And lookt at idly like the face of heaven.
 If strength be wanted for security,
 Mountains the guard, forbidding all approach
 With iron-pointed and uplifted gates,
 Thou wilt be welcome too in Aguilar,
 Impenetrable, marble-turreted,
 Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,
 The massive fane, the sylvan avenue ;
 Whose hospitality I proved myself,
 A willing leader in no impious war
 When fame and freedom urged me ; or mayst dwell
 In Reynosa's dry and thrifless dale,
 Unharvested beneath October moons,
 Among those frank and cordial villagers.
 They never saw us, and, poor simple souls !
 So little know they whom they call the great,
 Would pity one another less than us,
 In injury, disaster, or distress.

Covilla. But they would ask each other whence our grief,
 That they might pity.

Julian. Rest then just beyond,
 In the secluded scenes where Ebro springs
 And drives not from his fount the fallen leaf,
 So motionless and tranquil its repose.

Covilla. Thither let us depart, and speedily.

Julian. I can not go : I live not in the land
 I have reduced beneath such wretchedness :
 And who could leave the brave whose lives and fortunes
 Hang on his sword ?

Covilla. Me thou canst leave, my father ;
 Ah yes, for it is past ; too well thou seest
 My life and fortunes rest not upon thee.
 Long, happily . . could it be gloriously !
 Still mayst thou live, and save thy country still !

Julian. Unconquerable land ! unrival'd race !
 Whose bravery, too enduring, rues alike
 The power and weakness of accursed kings,
 How cruelly hast thou neglected me !
 Forcing me from thee, never to return,
 Nor in thy pangs and struggles to partake !
 I hear a voice ! 'tis Egilona : come,
 Recall thy courage, dear unhappy girl,
 Let us away.

SECOND ACT: THIRD SCENE.

EgILONA enters.

EgILONA. Remain ; I order thee.
Attend, and do thy duty : I am queen,
Unbent to degradation.

Covilla. I attend
Ever most humbly and most gratefully,
My too kind sovran, cousin now no more.
Could I perform but half the services
I owe her, I were happy for a time,
Or dared I show her half my love, 'twere bliss.

EgILONA. Oh ! I sink under gentleness like thine.
Thy sight is death to me ; and yet 'tis dear.
The gaudy trappings of assumptive state
Drop at the voice of nature to the earth,
Before thy feet. I can not force myself
To hate thee, to renounce thee ; yet . . Covilla !
Yet . . O distracting thought ! 'tis hard to see,
Hard to converse with, to admire, to love,
As from my soul I do, and must do, thee,
One who hath robb'd me of all pride and joy,
All dignity, all fondness. I adored
Roderigo. He was brave, and in discourse
Most voluble ; the masses of his mind
Were vast, but varied ; now absorb'd in gloom,
Majestic, not austere ; now their extent
Opening and waving in bright levity . .

Julian. Depart, my daughter. 'Twere as well to bear
His presence as his praise. Go ; she will dream
This phantasm out, nor notice thee depart.

EgILONA. What pliancy ! what tenderness ! what life !
O for the smiles of those who smile so seldom,
The love of those who know no other love !
Such he was, EgilonA, who was thine.

Julian. While he was worthy of the realm and thee.

EgILONA. Can it be true then, Julian, that thy aim
Is sovranly ? not virtue nor revenge ?

Julian. I swear to heaven, nor I nor child of mine
Ever shall mount to this polluted throne.

EgILONA. Then am I yet a queen. The savage Moor
Who could not conquer Ceuta from thy sword
In his own country, not with every wile
Of his whole race, not with his myriad crests
Of cavalry, seen from the Calpian highths

[COVILLA goes.]

Like locusts on the parcht and gleamy coast,
Will never conquer Spain.

Julian. Spain then was conquer'd
When fell her laws before the traitor king.

SECOND ACT: FOURTH SCENE.

Officer announces OPAS.

O queen, the metropolitan attends
On matter of high import to the state,
And wishes to confer in privacy.

Egilona (to Julian). Adieu then; and whate'er betide the
country,
Sustain at least the honours of our house.

[JULIAN goes before OPAS enters.]

Opas. I can not but commend, O Egilona,
Such resignation and such dignity.
Indeed he is unworthy; yet a queen
Rather to look for peace, and live remote
From cities, and from courts, and from her lord,
I hardly could expect in one so young,
So early, widely, wondrously, admired.

Egilona. I am resolv'd: religious men, good Opas,
In this resemble the vain libertine;
They find in woman no consistency,
No virtue but devotion, such as comes
To infancy or age or fear or love,
Seeking a place of rest, and finding none
Until it soar to heaven.

Opas. A spring of mind
That rises when all pressure is removed,
Firmness in pious and in chaste resolves,
But weakness in much fondness; these, O queen,
I did expect, I own.

Egilona. The better part
Be mine; the worse hath been, and is no more.

Opas. But if Roderigo have at length prevail'd
That Egilona willingly resigns
All claim to royalty, and casts away,
Indifferent or estranged, the marriage-bond
His perjury tore asunder, still the church
Hardly can sanction his new nuptial rites.

Egilona. What art thou saying? what new nuptial rites?

Opas. Thou knowest not?

Egilona. Am I a wife? a queen?

Abandon it! my claim to royalty!
 Whose hand was on my head when I arose
 Queen of this land? whose benediction sealed
 My marriage-vow? who broke it? was it I?
 And wouldst thou, virtuous Opas, wouldst thou dim
 The glorious light of thy declining days?
 Wouldst thou administer the sacred vows
 And sanction them, and bless them, for another,
 And bid her live in peace while I am living?
 Go then? I execrate and banish him
 For ever from my sight: we were not born
 For happiness together; none on earth
 Were ever so dissimilar as we.
 He is not worth a tear, a wish, a thought;
 Never was I deceived in him; I found
 No tenderness, no fondness, from the first.
 A love of power, a love of perfidy,
 Such is the love that is return'd for mine.
 Ungrateful man! 'twas not the pageantry
 Of regal state, the clarions, nor the guard,
 Nor loyal valour, nor submissive beauty,
 Silence at my approach, awe at my voice,
 Happiness at my smile, that led my youth
 Toward Roderigo. I had lived obscure,
 In humbleness, in poverty, in want,
 Blest, O supremely blest, with him alone;
 And he abandons me, rejects me, scorns me,
 Insensible! inhuman! for another!
 Thou shalt repent thy wretched choice, false man!
 Crimes such as thine call loudly for perdition;
 Heaven will inflict it, and not I; but I
 Neither will fall alone nor live despised.

[*A trumpet sounds.*

Opas. Peace, Egilona! he arrives: compose
 Thy turbid thoughts, meet him with dignity.

Egilona. He! in the camp of Julian! trust me, sir,
 He comes not hither, dares no longer use
 The signs of state, and flies from every foe.

[*Retires some distance.*

SECOND ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

Enter MUZA and ABDALAZIS.

Musa to Abdalazis. I saw him but an instant, and disguised,
 Yet this is not the traitor; on his brow
 Observe the calm of wisdom and of years.

Opas. Whom seekest thou ?

Musa.

Him who was king I seek.

He came array'd as herald to this tent.

Abdalasis. Thy daughter ! was she nigh ? perhaps for her
Was this disguise.

Musa.

Here, Abdalasis, kings

Disguise from other causes ; they obtain
Beauty by violence, and power by fraud.
Treason was his intent : we must admit
Whoever come ; our numbers are too small
For question or selection, and the blood
Of Spaniards shall win Spain for us to-day.

Abdalasis. The wicked can not move from underneath
Thy ruling eye.

Musa.

Right ! Julian and Roderigo
Are leagu'd against us, on these terms alone,
That Julian's daughter weds the christian king.

Egilona (rushing forward). 'Tis true . . and I proclaim it.

Abdalasis.

Heaven and earth !

Was it not thou, most lovely, most high-souled,
Who wish'dst us success, and me a crown ?

[*OPAS goes abruptly.*]

Egilona. I give it . . I am Egilona, queen
Of that detested man.

Abdalasis.

I touch the hand

That chains down fortune to the throne of fate,
And will avenge thee ; for 'twas thy command,
'Tis Heaven's. My father ! what retards our bliss ?
Why art thou silent ?

Musa.

Inexperienced years

Rather would rest on the soft lap, I see,
Of pleasure, after the fierce gusts of war.
O destiny ! that callest me alone,
Hapless, to keep the toilsome watch of state,
Painful to age, unnatural to youth,
Adverse to all society of friends,
Equality, and liberty, and ease,
The welcome cheer of the unbidden feast,
The gay reply, light, sudden, like the leap
Of the young forester's unbended bow,
But, above all, to tenderness at home,
And sweet security of kind concern
Even from those who seem most truly ours.
Who would resign all this, to be approacht,
Like a sick infant by a canting nurse,
To spread his arms in darkness, and to find

One universal hollowness around ?
Forego a little while that bane of peace :
Love may be cherish'd.

Abdalasis. 'Tis enough ; I ask
No other boon.

Musa. Not victory ?

Abdalasis. Farewell,
O queen ! I will deserve thee ; why do tears
Silently drop, and slowly, down thy veil ?
I shall return to worship thee, and soon ;
Why this affliction ? O, that I alone
Could raise or could repress it !

Egiona. We depart,
Nor interrupt your counsels, nor impede ;
O may they prosper, whatso'er they be,
And perfidy soon meet its just reward !
The infirm and peaceful Opas . . whither gone ?

Musa. Stay, daughter ; not for counsel are we met,
But to secure our arms from treachery,
O'erthrow and stifle base conspiracies,
Involve in his own toils our false ally . .

Egiona. Author of every woe I have endured !
Ah sacrilegious man ! he vowed to heaven
None of his blood should ever mount the throne.

Musa. Herein his vow indeed is ratified ;
Yet faithful ears have heard this offer made,
And weighty was the conference that ensued,
And long, not dubious ; for what mortal e'er
Refused alliance with illustrious power,
Though some have given its enjoyments up,
Tired and enfeebled by satiety ?
His friends and partisans, 'twas his pretence,
Should pass uninterrupted ; hence his camp
Is open every day to enemies.
You look around, O queen, as though you fear'd
Their entrance. Julian I pursue no more ;
You conquer him. Return we. I bequeath
Ruin, extermination, not reproach.
How we may best attain your peace and will
We must consider in some other place,
Not, lady, in the midst of snares and wiles
How to supplant your charms and seize your crown.
I rescue it ; fear not. Yes, we retire.
Whatever is your wish becomes my own,
Nor is there in this land but who obeys.

[*He leads her away.*]

THIRD ACT : FIRST SCENE.

Palace in Xeres.

RODERIGO and OPAS.

Roderigo. Impossible! she could not thus resign
Me, for a miscreant of Barbary,
A mere adventurer; but that citron face
Shall bleach and shrivel the whole winter long,
There on yon cork-tree by the sallyport.
She shall return.

Opas. To fondness and to faith?
Dost thou retain them, if she could return?

Roderigo. Retain them? she has forfeited by this
All right to fondness, all to royalty.

Opas. Consider and speak calmly: she deserves
Some pity, some reproof.

Roderigo. To speak then calmly,
Since thine eyes open and can see her guilt . .
Infamous and atrocious! let her go . .
Chains . .

Opas. What! in Muza's camp?

Roderigo. My scorn supreme!

Opas. Say pity.

Roderigo. Ay, ay, pity: that suits best.
I loved her, but *had* loved her; three whole years
Of pleasure, and of varied pleasure too,
Had worn the soft impression half away.
What I once felt, I would recall; the faint
Responsive voice grew fainter each reply:
Imagination sank amid the scenes
It labour'd to create: the vivid joy
Of fleeting youth I follow'd and possess.
'Tis the first moment of the tenderest hour,
'Tis the first mien on entering new delights,
We give our peace, our power, our souls, for these.

Opas. Thou hast; and what remains?

Roderigo. Roderigo: one
Whom hatred can not reach nor love cast down.

Opas. Nor gratitude nor pity nor remorse
Call back, nor vows nor earth nor heaven controul.
But art thou free and happy? art thou safe?
By shrewd contempt the humblest may chastise
Whom scarlet and its ermine can not scare,
And the sword skulks for everywhere in vain.
Thee the poor victim of thy outrages,
Woman, with all her weakness, may despise.

Roderigo. But first let quiet age have intervened.

Opas. Ne'er will the peace or apathy of age
Be thine, or twilight steal upon thy day.
The violent choose, but can not change, their end ;
Violence, by man or nature, must be theirs ;
Thine it must be ; and who to pity thee ?

Roderigo. Behold my solace ! none. I want no pity.

Opas. Proclaim we those the happiest of mankind
Who never knew a want ? O what a curse
To thee this utter ignorance of thine !
Julian, whom all the good commiserate,
Sees thee below him far in happiness.
A state indeed of no quick restlessness,
No glancing agitation, one vast swell
Of melancholy, deep, impassable,
Interminable, where his spirit alone
Broods and o'ershadows all, bears him from earth,
And purifies his chasten'd soul for heaven.
Both heaven and earth shall from thy grasp recede.
Whether on death or life thou arguest,
Untutor'd savage or corrupted heathen
Avows no sentiment so vile as thine.

Roderigo. Nor feels ?

Opas. O human nature ! I have heard
The secrets of the soul, and pitied thee.
Bad and accursed things have men confess'd
Before me, but have left them unarrayed,
Naked, and shivering with deformity.
The troubled dreams and deafening gush of youth
Fling o'er the fancy, struggling to be free,
Discordant and impracticable things :
If the good shudder at their past escapes,
Shall not the wicked shudder at their crimes ?
They shall : and I denounce upon thy head
God's vengeance : thou shalt rule this land no more.

Roderigo. What ! my own kindred leave me and renounce me !

Opas. Kindred ? and is there any in our world
So near us as those sources of all joy,
Those on whose bosom every gale of life
Blows softly, who reflect our images
In loveliness through sorrows and through age,
And bear them onward far beyond the grave ?

Roderigo. Methinks, most reverend *Opas*, not inapt
Are these fair views ; arise they from Seville ?

Opas. He who can scoff at them, may scoff at me.
Such are we, that the Giver of all Good
Shall, in the heart he purifies, possess

The latest love ; the earliest, no, not there !
 I've known the firm and faithful : even from them
 Life's eddying spring shed the first bloom on earth.
 I pity them, but ask their pity too :
 I love the happiness of men, and praise
 And sanctify the blessings I renounce.

Roderigo. Yet would thy baleful influence undermine
 The heaven-appointed throne.

Opas. The throne of guilt

Obdurate, without plea, without remorse.

Roderigo. What power hast thou ? perhaps thou soon wilt want
 A place of refuge.

Opas. Rather say, perhaps

My place of refuge will receive me soon.

Could I extend it even to thy crimes,

It should be open ; but the wrath of heaven
 Turns them against thee and subverts thy sway :

It leaves thee not, what wickedness and woe
 Off in their drear communion taste together,
 Hope and repentance.

Roderigo. But it leaves me arms,
 Vigour of soul and body, and a race
 Subject by law and dutiful by choice,
 Whose hand is never to be holden fast
 Within the closing cleft of gnarled creeds ;
 No easy prey for these vile mitred Moors.
 I, who received thy homage, may retort
 Thy threats, vain prelate, and abase thy pride.

Opas. Low must be those whom mortal can sink lower,
 Nor high are they whom human power may raise.

Roderigo. Judge now : for hear the signal.

Opas.

And derides

Thy buoyant heart the dubious gulphs of war ?
 Trumpets may sound, and not to victory.

Roderigo. The traitor and his daughter feel my power.

Opas. Just God ! avert it !

Roderigo.

Seize this rebel priest.

I will alone subdue my enemies.

[*Goes out.*]

THIRD ACT: SECOND SCENE.

RAMIRO and OSMA enter from opposite sides.

Ramiro. Where is the king ? his car is at the gate,
 His ministers attend him, but his foes
 Are yet more prompt, nor will await delay.

Osma. Nor need they, for he meets them as I speak.

Ramiro. With all his forces ? or our cause is lost.
Julian and Sisabert surround the walls.

Osm. Surround, sayst thou ? enter they not the gates ?

Ramiro. Perhaps ere now they enter.

Osm. Sisabert

Brings him our prisoner.

Ramiro. They are friends ! they held
A parley ; and the soldiers, when they saw
Count Julian, lower'd their arms and hail'd him king.

Osm. How ? and he leads them in the name of king ?

Ramiro. He leads them ; but amid that acclamation
He turn'd away his head, and call'd for vengeance.

Osm. In Sisabert, and in the cavalry
He led, were all our hopes.

Opas. Woe, woe is theirs
Who have no other.

Osm. What are thine ? obey
The just commands of our offended king :
Conduct him to the tower . . . off . . . instantly.

[Guard *hesitates* : OPAS goes.

Ramiro, let us haste to reinforce . . .

Ramiro. Hark ! is the king defeated ? hark !

Osm. I hear

Such acclamation as from victory
Arises not, but rather from revolt,
Reiterated, interrupted, lost.
Favour like this his genius will retrieve
By time or promises or chastisement,
Whiche'er he choose ; the speediest is the best.
His danger and his glory let us share ;
'Tis ours to serve him.

Ramiro. While he rules 'tis ours.
What chariot-wheels are thundering o'er the bridge ?

Osm. Roderigo's ; I well know them.

Ramiro. Now, the burst
Of acclamation ! now ! again, again.

Osm. I know the voices ; they are for Roderigo.

Ramiro. Stay, I entreat thee. One hath now prevail'd.
So far is certain.

Osm. Ay, the right prevails.

Ramiro. Transient and vain their joyance who rejoice
Precipitately and intemperately,
And bitter thoughts grow up where'er it fell.

Osm. Nor vain and transient theirs who idly float
Down popularity's unfertile stream,
And fancy all their own that rises round.

Ramiro. If thou yet lovest, as I know thou dost,
Thy king . . .

Osmo. I love him ; for he owes me much,
Brave soul ! and can not, though he would, repay.
Service and faith, pure faith and service hard,
Throughout his reign, if these things be desert,
These have I borne toward him, and still bear.

Ramiro. Come, from thy solitary eyrie come,
And share the prey, so plenteous and profuse,
Which a less valorous brood will else consume.
Much fruit is shaken down in civil storms :
And shall not orderly and loyal hands
Gather it up ? (*Loud shouts.*) Again ! and yet refuse ?
How different are those citizens without
From thee ! from thy serenity ! thy arch,
Thy firmament, of intrepidity !
For their new lord, whom they have never served,
Afraid were they to shout, and only struck
The pavement with their ferrels and their feet :
Now they are certain of the great event
Voices and hands they raise, and all contend
Who shall be bravest in applauding most.
Knowest thou these ?

Osmo. Their voices I know well . . .
And can they shout for him they would have slain ?
A prince untried they welcome ; soon their doubts
Are blown afar.

Ramiro. Yes, brighter scenes arise.
The disunited he alone unites,
The weak with hope he strengthens, and the strong
With justice.

Osmo. Wait : praise him when time hath given
A soundness and consistency to praise :
He shares it amply who bestows it right.

Ramiro. Doubtest thou ?

Osmo. Be it so : let us away ;
New courtiers come.

Ramiro. And why not join the new ?
Let us attend him and congratulate ;
Come on ; they enter.

Osmo. This is now my post
Now longer : I could face them in the field,
I can not here.

Ramiro. To-morrow all may change ;
Be comforted.

Osmo. I want nor change nor comfort.

Ramiro. The prisoner's voice!
Osma. The metropolitan's?
 Triumph he may . . not over me forgiven.
 This way, and thro' the chapel : none are there.

[*Goes out.*

THIRD ACT : THIRD SCENE.

OPAS and SISABERT.

Opas. The royal threat still sounds along these halls :
 Hardly his foot hath past them, and he flees
 From his own treachery ; all his pride, his hopes,
 Are scatter'd at a breath ; even courage fails
 Now falsehood sinks from under him. Behold,
 Again art thou where reign'd thy ancestors ;
 Behold the chapel of thy earliest prayers,
 Where I, whose chains are sunder'd at thy sight
 Ere they could close around these aged limbs,
 Received and blest thee, when thy mother's arm
 Was doubtful if it lost thee ! with delight
 Have I observed the promises we made
 Deeply imprest and manfully perform'd.
 Now, to thyself beneficent, O prince,
 Never henceforth renew those weak complaints
 Against Covilla's vows and Julian's faith,
 His honour broken, and her heart estranged.
 O, if thou holdest peace or glory dear,
 Away with jealousy ; brave Sisabert,
 Smite from thy bosom, smite that scorpion down :
 It swells and hardens amid mildew'd hopes,
 O'erspreads and blackens whate'er most delights,
 And renders us, haters of loveliness,
 The lowest of the fiends ; ambition led
 The higher on, furious to dispossess,
 From admiration sprung and frenzied love.
 This disingenuous soul-debasing passion,
 Rising from abject and most sordid fear,
 Consumes the vitals, pines, and never dies.
 For Julian's truth have I not pledged my own ?
 Have I not sworn Covilla weds no other ?

Sisabert. Her persecutor have not I chastised ?
 Have not I fought for Julian, won the town,
 And liberated thee ?

Opas. But left for him
 The dangers of pursuit, of ambuscade,
 Of absence from thy high and splendid name.

Sisabert. Do probity and truth want such supports ?

Opas. Gryphens and eagles, ivory and gold,
Can add no clearness to the lamp above,
But many look for them in palaces
Who have them not, and want them not, at home.
Virtue and valour and experience
Are never trusted by themselves alone
Further than infancy and idiocy :
The men around him, not the man himself,
Are lookt at, and by these is he preferr'd.
'Tis the green mantle of the warrener
And his loud whistle that alone attract
The lofty gazes of the noble herd :
And thus, without thy countenance and help
Feeble and faint is yet our confidence,
Brief perhaps our success.

Sisabert. Should I resign
To Abdalazis her I once adored ?
He truly, he must wed a Spanish queen !
He rule in Spain ! ah ! whom could any land
Obey so gladly as the meek, the humble,
The friend of all who have no friend beside,
Covilla ! could he choose or could he find
Another who might so confirm his power ?
And now indeed from long domestic wars
Who else survives of all our ancient house ?

Opas. But Egilona.

Sisabert. Vainly she upbraids
Roderigo.

Opas. She divorces him, abjures,
And carries vengeance to that hideous highth
Which piety and chastity would shrink
To look from, on the world or on themselves.

Sisabert. She may forgive him yet.

Opas. Ah, Sisabert !
Wretched are those a woman has forgiven :
With her forgiveness ne'er hath love return'd.
Ye know not till too late the filmy tie
That holds heaven's precious boon eternally
To such as fondly cherish her ; once go
Driven by mad passion, strike but at her peace,
And, though she step aside from broad reproach,
Yet every softer virtue dies away.
Beaming with virtue inaccessible
Stood Egilona ; for her lord she lived,
And for the heavens that raised her sphere so high :

All thoughts were on her, all, beside her own.
 Negligent as the blossoms of the field,
 Array'd in candour and simplicity,
 Before her path she heard the streams of joy
 Murmur her name in all their cadences,
 Saw them in every scene, in light, in shade,
 Reflect her image, but acknowledge them
 Hers most complete when flowing from her most.
 All things in want of her, herself of none,
 Pomp and dominion lay beneath her feet
 Unfelt and unregarded. Now behold
 The earthly passions war against the heavenly!
 Pride against love, ambition and revenge
 Against devotion and compliancy:
 Her glorious beams adversity hath blunted;
 And coming nearer to our quiet view,
 The original clay of coarse mortality
 Hardens and flaws around her.

Sisabert. Every germ
 Of virtue perishes when love recedes
 From those hot shifting sands, the female heart.

Opas. His was the fault; be his the punishment.
 'Tis not their own crimes only, men commit,
 They harrow them into another's breast,
 And they shall reap the bitter growth with pain.

Sisabert. Yes, blooming royalty will first attract
 These creatures of the desert. Now I breathe
 More freely. She is theirs if I pursue
 The fugitive again. He well deserves
 The death he flies from. Stay! Don Julian twice
 Call'd him aloud, and he, methinks, replied.
 Could not I have remain'd a moment more
 And seen the end? although with hurried voice
 He bade me intercept the scattered foes,
 And hold the city barr'd to their return.
 May Egilona be another's wife
 Whether he die or live! but oh! Covilla!
 She never can be mine! yet she may be
 Still happy . . . no, Covilla, no . . . not happy,
 But more deserving happiness without it.
 Mine never! nor another's. 'Tis enough.
 The tears I shed no rival can deride;
 In the fond intercourse a name once cherisht
 Will never be defended by faint smiles,
 Nor given up with vows of alter'd love.
 And is the passion of my soul at last

Reduced to this? is this my happiness?
 This my sole comfort? this the close of all
 Those promises, those tears, those last adieus,
 And those long vigils for the morrow's dawn?

Opas. Arouse thee! be thyself. O Sisabert,
 Awake to glory from these feverish dreams:
 The enemy is in our land; two enemies;
 We must quell both: shame on us if we fail.

Sisabert. Incredible! a nation be subdued
 Peopled as ours.

Opas. Corruption may subvert
 What force could never.

Sisabert. Traitors may.

Opas. Alas!

If traitors can, the basis is but frail.
 I mean such traitors as the vacant world
 Echoes most stunningly: not fur-robed knaves
 Whose whispers raise the dreaming bloodhound's ear
 Against benighted famisht wanderers,
 While with remorseless guilt they undermine
 Palace and shed, their very father's house.
 O blind! their own, their children's heritage,
 To leave more ample space for fearful wealth.
 Plunder in some most harmless guise they swathe,
 Call it some very meek and hallow'd name,
 Some known and borne by their good forefathers,
 And own and vaunt it thus redeem'd from sin.
 These are the plagues heaven sends o'er every land
 Before it sink . . . the portents of the street,
 Not of the air . . . lest nations should complain
 Of distance or of dimness in the signs,
 Flaring from far to Wisdom's eye alone:
 These are the last: these, when the sun rides high
 In the forenoon of doomsday, revelling,
 Make men abhor the earth, arraign the skies.
 Ye who behold them spoil field after field,
 Despising them in individual strength,
 Not with one torrent sweeping them away
 Into the ocean of eternity,
 Arise! despatch! no renovating gale,
 No second spring awaits you: up, begone,
 If you have force and courage even for flight.
 The blast of dissolution is behind.

Sisabert. How terrible! how true! what voice like thine
 Can rouse and warn the nation! If she rise,
 Say, whither go, where stop we?

Opas. God will guide.

Let us pursue the oppressor to destruction ;
The rest is Heaven's : must we move no step
Because we can not see the boundaries
Of our long way, and every stone between ?

Sisabert. Is not thy vengeance for the late affront,
For threats and outrage and imprisonment ?

Opas. For outrage, yes ; imprisonment and threats
I pardon him, and whatsoever ill
He could do *me*.

Sisabert. To hold Covilla from me !
To urge her into vows against her faith,
Against her beauty, youth, and inclination,
Without her mother's blessing, nay, without
Her father's knowledge and authority,
So that she never will behold me more,
Flying afar for refuge and for help
Where never friend but God will comfort her !

Opas. These and more barbarous deeds were perpetrated.

Sisabert. Yet her proud father deign'd not to inform
Me, whom he loved and taught, in peace and war,
Me, whom he called his son, before I hoped
To merit it by marriage or by arms.
He offer'd no excuse, no plea ; exprest
No sorrow ; but with firm unfaltering voice
Commanded me . . I trembled as he spoke . .
To follow where he led, redress his wrongs,
And vindicate the honour of his child.
He call'd on God, the witness of his cause,
On Spain, the partner of his victories ;
And yet amid these animating words
Roll'd the huge tear down his unvisor'd face ;
A general swell of indignation rose
Thro' the long line, sobs burst from every breast,
Hardly one voice succeeded ; you might hear
The impatient hoof strike the soft sandy plain.
But when the gates flew open, and the king
In his high car came forth triumphantly,
Then was Count Julian's stature more elate ;
Tremendous was the smile that smote the eyes
Of all he past. ' *Fathers, and sons, and brothers,*
He cried, ' *I fight your battles, follow me !*
Soldiers, we know no danger but disgrace !
' *Father, and general, and king,*' they shout,
And would proclaim him : back he cast his face,
Pallid with grief, and one loud groan burst forth ;

It kindled vengeance thro' the Asturian ranks,
And they soon scatter'd, as the blasts of heaven
Scatter the leaves and dust, the astonisht foe.

Opas. And doubttest thou his truth ?

Sisabert. I love . . . and doubt . . .

Fight . . . and believe : Roderigo spoke untruths ;
In him I place no trust ; but Julian holds
Truths in reserve : how should I quite confide !

Opas. By sorrows thou beholdest him opprest ;
Doubt the more prosperous. March, Sisabert,
Once more against his enemy and ours :
Much hath been done, but much there yet remains.

FOURTH ACT : FIRST SCENE.

Tent of JULIAN.

RODERIGO and JULIAN.

Julian. The people had deserted thee, and throng'd
My standard, had I raised it, at the first ;
But once subsiding, and no voice of mine
Calling by name each grievance to each man,
They, silent and submissive by degrees,
Bore thy hard yoke, and hadst thou but opprest,
Would still have borne it : thou hast now deceived ;
Thou hast done all a foreign foe could do
And more against them ; with ingratitude
Not hell itself could arm the foreign foe ;
'Tis forged at home and kills not from afar.
Amid whate'er vain glories fell upon
Thy rainbow span of power, which I dissolve,
Boast not how thou conferredst wealth and rank,
How thou preservedst me, my family,
All my distinctions, all my offices,
When Witiza was murder'd ; that I stand
Count Julian at this hour by special grace.
The sword of Julian saved the walls of Ceuta,
And not the shadow that attends his name :
It was no badge, no title, that o'erthrew
Soldier and steed and engine. Don Roderigo !
The truly and the falsely great here differ :
These by dull wealth or daring fraud advance ;
Him the Almighty calls amid his people
To sway the wills and passions of mankind.
The weak of heart and intellect beheld

Thy splendour, and adored thee lord of Spain :
I rose . . . Roderigo lords o'er Spain no more.

Roderigo. Now to a traitor's add a boaster's name.

Julian. Shameless and arrogant, dost thou believe
I boast for pride or pastime ? forced to boast,
Truth costs me more than falsehood e'er cost thee.

Divested of that purple of the soul,
That potency, that palm of wise ambition,
Cast headlong by thy madness from that high,
That only eminence 'twixt earth and heaven,
Virtue, which some desert, but none despise,
Whether thou art beheld again on earth,
Whether a captive or a fugitive,
Miner or galley-slave, depends on me ;
But he alone who made me what I am
Can make me greater or can make me less.

Roderigo. Chance, and chance only, threw me in thy power ;
Give me my sword again and try my strength.

Julian. I tried it in the front of thousands.

Roderigo. Death

At least vouchsafe me from a soldier's hand.

Julian. I love to hear thee ask it : now my own
Would not be bitter ; no, nor immature.

Roderigo. Defy it, say thou rather.

Julian. Death itself

Shall not be granted thee, unless from God ;
A dole from his and from no other hand.
Thou shalt now hear and own thine infamy.

Roderigo. Chains, dungeons, tortures . . . but I hear no more.

Julian. Silence, thou wretch ! live on . . . ay, live . . . ab-
horr'd.

Thou shalt have tortures, dungeons, chains enough ;
They naturally rise and grow around
Monsters like thee, everywhere, and for ever.

Roderigo. Insulter of the fallen ! must I endure
Commands as well as threats ? my vassal's too ?
Nor breathe from underneath his trampling feet ?

Julian. Could I speak patiently who speak to thee,
I would say more : part of thy punishment
It should be, to be taught.

Roderigo. Reserve thy wisdom
Until thy patience come, its best ally :
I learn no lore, of peace or war, from thee.

Julian. No, thou shalt study soon another tongue,
And suns more ardent shall mature thy mind.
Either the cross thou bearest, and thy knees

Among the silent caves of Palestine
 Wear the sharp flints away with midnight prayer,
 Or thou shalt keep the fasts of Barbary,
 Shalt wait amid the crowds that throng the well
 From sultry noon till the skies fade again,
 To draw up water and to bring it home
 In the crackt gourd of some vile testy knave,
 Who spurns thee back with bastinated foot
 For ignorance or delay of his command.

Roderigo. Rather the poison or the bowstring.

Julian.

Slaves

To other's passions die such deaths as those :
 Slaves to their own should die . .

Roderigo.

What worse ?

Julian.

Their own.

Roderigo. Is this thy counsel, renegade ?

Julian.

Not mine :

I point a better path, nay, force thee on.
 I shelter thee from every brave man's sword
 While I am near thee : I bestow on thee
 Life : if thou die, 'tis when thou sojournest
 Protected by this arm and voice no more :
 'Tis slavishly, 'tis ignominiously,
 'Tis by a villain's knife.

Roderigo.

By whose ?

Julian.

Roderigo's.

Roderigo. O powers of vengeance! must I hear? . . endure? . .
 Live ?

Julian. Call thy vassals : no ? then wipe the drops
 Of froward childhood from thy shameless eyes.
 So ! thou canst weep for passion ; not for pity.

Roderigo. One hour ago I ruled all Spain ! a camp
 Not larger than a sheepfold stood alone
 Against me : now, no friend throughout the world
 Follows my steps or hearkens to my call.
 Behold the turns of fortune, and expect
 No better : of all faithless men the Moors
 Are the most faithless : from thy own experience
 Thou canst not value nor rely on them.

Julian. I value not the mass that makes my sword,
 Yet while I use it I rely on it.

Roderigo. Julian, thy gloomy soul still meditates . .
 Plainly I see it . . death to me . . pursue
 The dictates of thy leaders, let revenge
 Have its full sway, let Barbary prevail,
 And the pure creed her elders have embraced :

Those placid sages hold assassination
A most compendious supplement to law.

Julian. Thou knowest not the one, nor I the other.
Torn hast thou from me all my soul held dear,
Her form, her voice, all, hast thou banisht from me,
Nor dare I, wretched as I am! recall
Those solaces of every grief erewhile.
I stand abased before insulting crime,
I falter like a criminal myself;
The hand that hurl'd thy chariot o'er its wheels,
That held thy steeds erect and motionless
As molten statues on some palace-gate,
Shakes as with palsied age before thee now.
Gone is the treasure of my heart for ever,
Without a father, mother, friend, or name.
Daughter of Julian . . . Such was her delight . . .
Such was mine too! what pride more innocent,
What surely less deserving pangs like these,
Than springs from filial and parental love!
Debarr'd from every hope that issues forth
To meet the balmy breath of early life,
Her sadden'd days, all cold and colourless,
Will stretch before her their whole weary length
Amid the sameness of obscurity.

She wanted not seclusion to unveil
Her thoughts to heaven, cloister, nor midnight bell;
She found it in all places, at all hours:
While to assuage my labours she indulged
A playfulness that shunn'd a mother's eye,
Still to avert my perils there arose
A piety that even from *me* retired. ¶

Roderigo. Such was she! what am I! those are the arms
That are triumphant when the battle fails.
O Julian! Julian! all thy former words
Struck but the imbecile plumes of vanity,
These thro' its steely coverings pierce the heart.
I ask not life nor death; but, if I live,
Send my most bitter enemy to watch
My secret paths, send poverty, send pain . . .
I will add more . . . wise as thou art, thou knowest
No foe more furious than forgiven kings.
I ask not then what thou wouldst never grant:
May heaven, O Julian, from thy hand receive
A pardon'd man, a chasten'd criminal.

Julian. This further curse hast thou inflicted; wretch!
I can not pardon thee.

Roderigo. Thy tone, thy mien,
Befute those words.

Julian. No . . I can *not* forgive.

Roderigo. Upon my knee, my conqueror, I implore!
Upon the earth, before thy feet . . hard heart!

Julian. Audacious! hast thou never heard that prayer
And scorn'd it? 'tis the last thou shouldst repeat.
Upon the earth! upon her knees! O God?

Roderigo. Resemble not a wretch so lost as I:
Be better; O! be happier; and pronounce it.

Julian. I swerve not from my purpose: thou art mine,
Conquer'd; and I have sworn to dedicate,
Like a torn banner on my chapel's roof,
Thee to that power from whom thou hast rebell'd.
Expiate thy crimes by prayer, by penances.

Roderigo. Hasten the hour of trial, speak of peace.
Pardon me not then, but with purer lips
Implore of God, who *would* hear *thee*, to pardon.

Julian. Hope it I may . . pronounce it . . O Roderigo!
Ask it of him who can; I too will ask,
And, in my own transgressions, pray for thine.

Roderigo. One name I dare not . .

Julian. Go; abstain from that;
I do conjure thee, raise not in my soul
Again the tempest that has wreckt my fame;
Thou shalt not breathe in the same clime with her.
Far o'er the unebbing sea thou shalt adore
The eastern star, and may thy end be peace.

FOURTH ACT: SECOND SCENE.

RODERIGO goes: HERNANDO enters.

Hernando. From the prince Tarik I am sent, my lord.

Julian. A welcome messenger, my brave Hernando.
How fares it with the gallant soul of Tarik?

Hernando. Most joyfully; he scarcely had pronounced
Your glorious name, and bid me urge your speed,
Than, with a voice as though it answer'd heaven,
'*He shall confound them in their dark designs,*'
Cried he, and turn'd away, with that swift stride
Wherewith he meets and quells his enemies.

Julian. Alas! I can not bear felicitation,
Who shunn'd it even in felicity.

Hernando. Often we hardly think ourselves the happy

Unless we hear it said by those around.
 O my lord Julian, how your praises cheer'd
 Our poor endeavours! sure, all hearts are open,
 Lofty and low, wise and unwise, to praise.
 Even the departed spirit hovers round
 Our blessings and our prayers; the corse itself
 Hath shined with other light than the still stars
 Shed on its rest, or the dim taper nigh.
 My father, old men say who saw him dead,
 And heard your lips pronounce him good and happy,
 Smiled faintly through the quiet gloom that eve,
 And the shroud throbb'd upon his grateful breast.
 Howe'er it be, many who tell the tale
 Are good and happy from that voice of praise.
 His guidance and example were denied
 My youth and childhood: what I am I owe . .

Julian. Hernando, look not back: a narrow path
 And arduous lies before thee; if thou stop
 Thou fallest; go right onward, nor observe
 Closely and rigidly another's way,
 But, free and active, follow up thy own.

Hernando. The voice that urges now my manly step
 Onward in life, recalls me to the past,
 And from that fount I freshen for the goal.
 Early in youth, among us villagers
 Converse and ripen'd counsel you bestow'd.
 O happy days of (far departed!) peace,
 Days when the mighty Julian stoopt his brow
 Entering our cottage-door; another air
 Breath'd through the house; tired age and lightsome youth
 Beheld him with intensest gaze; these felt
 More chasten'd joy; they more profound repose.
 Yes, my best lord, when labour sent them home
 And midday suns, when from the social meal
 The wicker window held the summer heat,
 Prais'd have those been who, going unperceived,
 Open'd it wide that all might see you well:
 Nor were the children blamed, hurrying to watch
 Upon the mat what rush would last arise
 From your foot's pressure, ere the door was closed,
 And not yet wondering how they dared to love.
 Your counsels are more precious now than ever,
 But are they . . pardon if I err . . the same?
 Tarik is gallant, kind, the friend of Julian,
 Can he be more? or ought he to be less?
 Alas! his faith!

Julian. In peace or war? Hernando.

Hernando. O, neither; far above it; faith in God.

Julian. 'Tis God's, not thine: embrace it not, nor hate it.
Precious or vile, how dare we seize that offering,
Scatter it, spurn it, in its way to heaven,
Because we know it not? the sovran lord
Accepts his tribute, myrrh and frankincense
From some, from others penitence and prayer:
Why intercept them from his gracious hand?
Why dash them down? why smite the supplicant?

Hernando. 'Tis what they do.

Julian. Avoid it thou the more.

If time were left me, I could hear well-pleas'd
How Tarik fought up Calpe's fabled cliff,
While I pursued the friends of Don Roderigo
Across the plain, and drew fresh force from mine.
O! had some other land, some other cause,
Invited him and me, I then could dwell
On this hard battle with unmixt delight.

Hernando. Eternal is its glory, if the deed
Be not forgotten till it be surpast:
Much praise by land, by sea much more, he won,
For then a Julian was not at his side,
Nor led the van, nor awed the best before;
The whole, a mighty whole, was his alone.
There might be seen how far he shone above
All others of the day: old Muza watcht
From his own shore the richly laden fleet,
Ill-arm'd and scatter'd, and pursued the rear
Beyond those rocks that bear St. Vincent's name,
Cutting the treasure, not the strength, away;
Valiant, where any prey lies undevour'd
In hostile creek or too confiding isle.
Tarik, with his small barks, but with such love
As never chief from rugged sailor won,
Smote their high masts and swelling rampires down,
And Cadiz wept in fear o'er Trafalgar.
Who that beheld our sails from off the highths,
Like the white birds, nor larger, tempt the gale
In sunshine and in shade, now almost touch
The solitary shore, glance, turn, retire,
Would think these lovely playmates could portend
Such mischief to the world, such blood, such woe;
Could draw to them from far the peaceful hinds,
Cull the gay flower of cities, and divide
Friends, children, every bond of human life;

Could dissipate whole families, could sink
Whole states in ruin, at one hour, one blow.

Julian. Go, good Hernando? who *would* think these things?
Say to the valiant Tarik I depart
Forthwith: he knows not from what heaviness
Of soul I linger here; I could endure
No converse, no compassion, no approach,
Other than thine, whom the same cares improved
Beneath my father's roof, my foster-brother,
To brighter days and happier end, I hope;
In whose fidelity my own resides
With Tarik and with his compeers and chief.
I can not share the gladness I excite,
Yet shall our Tarik's generous heart rejoice.

FOURTH ACT: THIRD SCENE.

EGILONA enters: HERNANDO goes.

Egilona. O fly me not because I am unhappy,
Because I am deserted fly me not;
It was not so before, and can it be
Ever from Julian?

Julian. What would *Egilona*
That Julian's power with her new lords can do?
Surely her own must there preponderate.

Egilona. I hold no suit to them. Restore, restore
Roderigo.

Julian. He no longer is my prisoner.

Egilona. Escapes he then?

Julian. Escapes he, dost thou say?
O *Egilona*! what unworthy passion . . .

Egilona. Unworthy, when I loved him, was my passion;
The passion that now swells my heart is just.

Julian. What fresh reproaches hath he merited?

Egilona. Deep-rooted hatred shelters no reproach.
But whither is he gone?

Julian. Far from the walls.

Egilona. And I knew nothing?

Julian. His offence was known
To thee at least.

Egilona. Will it be expiated?

Julian. I trust it will.

Egilona. This withering calm consumes me.
He marries then Covilla! 'twas for this
His people were excited to rebel,

His sceptre was thrown by, his vows were scorn'd,
And I . . . and I . . .

Julian. Cease, Egilona !

Egilona. Cease ?
Sooner shalt thou to live than I to reign.

FIFTH ACT : FIRST SCENE.

Tent of MUZA.

MUZA. TARIK. ABDALAZIS.

Muza. To have first landed on these shores appears
Transcendent glory to the applauded Tarik.

Tarik. Glory, but not transcendent, it appears,
What might in any other.

Muza. Of thyself
All this vain boast ?

Tarik. Not of myself : 'twas Julian.
Against his shield the reffluent surges roll'd,
While the sea-breezes threw the arrows wide,
And fainter cheers urged the reluctant steeds.

Muza. That Julian, of whose treason I have proofs,
That Julian, who rejected my commands
Twice, when our mortal foe besieged the camp,
And forced my princely presence to his tent.

Tarik. Say rather, who without one exhortation,
One precious drop from true believer's vein,
Marcht, and discomfited our enemies.

I found in him no treachery. Hernando,
Who, little versed in moody wiles, is gone
To lead him hither, was by him assign'd
My guide, and twice in doubtful fight his arm
Protected me : once on the highths of Calpe,
Once on the plain, when courtly jealousies
Tore from the bravest and the best his due,
And gave the dotard and the coward command :
Then came Roderigo forth : the front of war
Grew darker : him, equal in chivalry,
Julian alone could with success oppose.

Abdalasis. I doubt their worth who praise their enemies.

Tarik. And theirs doubt I who persecute their friends.

Muza. Thou art in league with him.

Tarik. Thou wert, by oaths ;
I am without them ; for his heart is brave.

Muza. Am I to bear all this ?

Tarik. All this and more :
 Soon wilt thou see the man whom thou hast wrong'd,
 And the keen hatred in thy breast conceal'd
 Find its right way, and sting thee to the core.

Musa. Hath he not foil'd us in the field? not held
 Our wisdom to reproach?

Tarik. Shall we abandon
 All he hath left us in the eyes of men?
 Shall we again make him our adversary
 Whom we have proved so, long and fatally?
 If he subdue for us our enemies,
 Shall we raise others, or, for want of them,
 Convert him into one against his will?

FIFTH ACT: SECOND SCENE.

HERNANDO enters. TARIK continues.

Here comes Hernando from that prince himself.

Musa. Who scorns, himself, to come.

Hernando. The queen detains him.

Abdalasis. How! Egilona?

Musa. 'Twas my will.

Tarik. At last

He must be happy; for delicious calm
 Follows the fierce enjoyment of revenge.

Hernando. That calm was never his, no other will be.
 Thou knowest not, and mayest thou never know,
 How bitter is the tear that fiery shame
 Scourges and tortures from the soldier's eye.
 Whichever of these bad reports be true,
 He hides it from all hearts to wring his own,
 And drags the heavy secret to the grave.
 Not victory that o'ershadows him sees he;
 No airy and light passion stirs abroad
 To ruffle or to soothe him; all are quell'd
 Beneath a mightier, sterner stress of mind:
 Wakeful he sits, and lonely, and unmoved,
 Beyond the arrows, views, or shouts of men;
 As oftentimes an eagle, ere the sun
 Throws o'er the varying earth his early ray,
 Stands solitary, stands immovable
 Upon some highest cliff, and rolls his eye,
 Clear, constant, unobservant, unabased,
 In the cold light above the dews of morn.
 He now assumes that quietness of soul

Which never but in danger have I seen
On his staid breast.

Tarik. Danger is past ; he conquers ;
No enemy is left him to subdue.

Hernando. He sank not, while there was, into himself.
Now plainly see I from his alter'd tone,
He can not live much longer. Thanks to God !

Tarik. What ! wishest thou thy once kind master dead ?
Was he not kind to thee, ungrateful slave !

Hernando. The gentlest, as the bravest, of mankind.
Therefore shall memory dwell more tranquilly
With Julian once at rest, than friendship could,
Knowing him yearn for death with speechless love.
For his own sake I could endure his loss,
Pray for it, and thank God ; yet mourn I must
Him above all, so great, so bountiful,
So blessed once ! bitterly must I mourn.
'Tis not my solace that 'tis his desire ;
Of all who pass us in life's drear descent
We grieve the most for those that wisht to die.
A father to us all, he merited,
Unhappy man ! all a good father's joy
In his own house, where seldom he hath been,
But, ever mindful of its dear delights,
He form'd one family around him ever.

Tarik. Yes, we have seen and known him. Let his fame
Refresh his friends, but let it stream afar,
Nor in the twilight of home-scenes be lost.
He chose the best, and cherisht them ; he left
To self-reproof the mutinies of vice ;
Avarice, that dwarfs Ambition's tone and mien ;
Envy, sick nursling of the court ; and Pride
That can not bear his semblance nor himself ;
And Malice, with blear visage half-descried
Amid the shadows of her hiding-place.

Hernando. What could I not endure, O gallant man,
To hear him spoken of as thou hast spoken !
Oh ! I would almost be a slave to him
Who calls me one.

Musa. What ! art thou not ? begone.

Tarik. Reply not, brave Hernando, but retire.
All can revile, few only can reward.
Behold the meed our mighty chief bestows !
Accept it, for thy services, and mine.
More, my bold Spaniard, hath obedience won
Than anger, even in the ranks of war.

Hernando. The soldier, not the Spaniard, shall obey. [Goes.
Musa to Tarik. Into our very council bringest thou
 Children of reprobation and perdition?
 Darkness thy deeds and emptiness thy speech,
 Such images thou raisest as buffoons
 Carry in merriment on festivals;
 Nor worthiness nor wisdom would display
 To public notice their deformities,
 Nor cherish them nor fear them; why shouldst thou?
Tarik. I fear not them nor thee.

FIFTH ACT: THIRD SCENE.

EGILONA enters.

Abdalaxis. Advance, O queen.
 Now let the turbulence of faction cease.
Musa. Whate'er thy purpose, speak, and be composed.
Egilona. He goes; he is afar; he follows her;
 He leads her to the altar, to the throne;
 For, calm in vengeance, wise in wickedness,
 The traitor hath prevail'd, o'er him, o'er me,
 O'er you, the slaves, the dupes, the scora, of Julian.
 What have I heard! what have I seen!
Musa. Proceed.
Abdalaxis. And I swear vengeance on his guilty head
 Who intercepts from thee the golden rays
 Of sovranity, who dares rescind thy rights,
 Who steals upon thy rest, and breathes around
 Empoison'd damps o'er that serenity
 Which leaves the world, and faintly lingers here.
Musa. Who shuns thee . . .
Abdalaxis. Whose desertion interdicts
 Homage, authority, precedence . . .
Musa. Till war shall rescue them . . .
Abdalaxis. And love restore.
Egilona. O generous Abdalaxis! never! never!
 My enemies . . . Julian alone remains . . .
 The worst in safety, far beyond my reach,
 Breathe freely on the summit of their hopes,
 Because they never stopt, because they sprang
 From crime to crime, and trampled down remorse.
 Oh! if her heart knew tenderness like mine!
 Grant vengeance on the guilty; grant but that,
 I ask no more; my hand, my crown is thine.
 Fulfill the justice of offended heaven,

Assert the sacred rights of royalty,
Come not in vain, crush the rebellious crew,
Crush, I implore, the indifferent and supine.

Musa. Roderigo thus escaped from Julian's tent ?

Egilona. No, not escaped, escorted, like a king.
The base Covilla first pursued her way
On foot ; but after her the royal car,
Which bore me from San Pablo's to the throne,
Empty indeed, yet ready at her voice,
Roll'd o'er the plain amid the carcases
Of those who fell in battle or in flight :
She, a deceiver still, to whate'er speed
The moment might incite her, often stopt
To mingle prayers with the departing breath,
Improvident ! and those with heavy wounds
Groan'd bitterly beneath her tottering knee.

Tarik. Now, by the clement and the merciful !
The girl did well. When I breathe out my soul,
Oh ! if compassion give one pang the more,
That pang be mine ; here be it, in this land :
Such women are they in this land alone.

Egilona. Insulting man !

Musa. We shall confound him yet.
Say, and speak quickly, whither went the king ?
Thou knewest where was Julian.

Abdalasis. I will tell
Without his answer : yes, my friends ! yes, Tarik,
Now will I speak, nor thou for once reply.
There is, I hear, a poor half-ruined cell
In Xeres, whither few indeed resort,
Green are the walls within, green is the floor
And slippery from disuse ; for christian feet
Avoid it, as half-holy, half-accurst.
Still in its dark recess fanatic Sin
Abases to the ground his tangled hair,
And servile scourges and reluctant groans
Roll o'er the vault uninterrupted,
Till (such the natural stillness of the place)
The very tear upon the damps below
Drops audible, and the heart's throb replies.
There is the idol maid of christian creed,
And taller images whose history
I know not nor inquired. A scene of blood,
Of resignation amid mortal pangs,
And other things exceeding all belief.
Hither the aged Opas of Seville

Walkt slowly, and behind him was a man
 Barefooted, bruised, dejected, comfortless,
 In sackcloth; the white ashes on his head
 Dropt as he smote his breast; he gather'd up,
 Replaced them all, groan'd deeply, lookt to heaven,
 And held them like a treasure with claspt hands.

Egilona. O! was Roderigo so abas'd?

Musa. 'Twas he.

Now, Egilona, judge between your friends
 And enemies: behold what wretches brought
 The king, thy lord, Roderigo, to disgrace.

Egilona. He merited . . . but not from them . . . from me
 This, and much worse: had I inflicted it,
 I had rejoic'd . . . at what I ill endure.

Musa. For thee, for thee alone, we wisht him here,
 But other hands releas't him.

Abdalazis. With what aim
 Will soon appear to those discerning eyes.

Egilona. I pray thee, tell what past until that hour.

Abdalazis. Few words, and indistinct: repentant sobs
 Fill'd the whole space; the taper in his hand,
 Lighting two small dim lamps before the altar,
 He gave to Opas; at the idol's feet
 He laid his crown, and wiped his tears away.
 The crown reverts not, but the tears return.

Egilona. Yes, Abdalazis! soon, abundantly.
 If he had only call'd upon my name,
 Seeking my pardon ere he lookt to heaven's,
 I could have . . . no! he thought not once on me!
 Never shall he find peace or confidence;
 I will rely on fortune and on thee,
 Nor fear my future lot: sure, Abdalazis,
 A fall so great can never happen twice,
 Nor man again be faithless, like Roderigo.

Abdalazis. Faithless he may be still, never so faithless.
 Fainter must be the charms, remote the days,
 When memory and dread example die,
 When love and terror thrill the heart no more,
 And Egilona is herself forgotten.

FIFTH ACT: FOURTH SCENE.

JULIAN enters.

Tarik. Turn, and behold him! who is now confounded?
 Ye who awaited him, where are ye? speak.
 Is some close comet blazing o'er your tents?

Muza! Abdalazis! princes! conquerors!
Summon, interrogate, command, condemn.

Muza. Justly, Don Julian . . . but respect for rank
Allays resentment, nor interrogates
Without due form . . . justly may we accuse
This absence from our councils, from our camp;
This loneliness in which we still remain
Who came invited to redress your wrongs.
Where is the king?

Julian. The people must decide.

Muza. Imperfectly, I hope, I understand
Those words, unworthy of thy birth and age.

Julian. O chieftain, such have been our Gothic laws.

Muza. Who then amid such turbulence is safe?

Julian. He who observes them: 'tis no turbulence,
It violates no peace: 'tis surely worth
A voice, a breath of air, thus to create
By their high will the man, form'd after them
In their own image, vested with their power,
To whom they trust their freedom and their lives.

Muza. They trust! the people! God assigns the charge,
Kings open but the book of destiny
And read their names; all that remains for them
The mystic hand from time to time reveals.
Worst of idolaters! idolater
Of that refractory and craving beast
Whose den is in the city, at thy hand
I claim our common enemy, the king.

Julian. Sacred from justice then! but not from malice!

Tarik. Surrender him, my friend: be sure his pains
Will not be soften'd.

Julian. 'Tis beyond my power.

Tarik. To-morrow . . . if in any distant fort
He lies to-night: send after him.

Julian. My faith
Is plighted, and he lives . . . no prisoner.

Egilona. I knew the truth.

Abdalazis (to JULIAN). Now, Tarik, hear and judge.
Was he not in thy camp? and in disguise?

Tarik. No: I will answer thee.

Muza. Audacious man!
Had not the Kalif Walid placed thee here,
Chains and a traitor's death should be thy doom.
Speak, Abdalazis! Egilona, speak.
Were ye not present? was not I myself?
And aided not this Julian his escape?

Julian. 'Tis true.

Tarik. Away then friendship! to thy fate
I leave thee: thou hast render'd Muza just,
Me hostile to thee. Who is safe? a man
Arm'd with such power and with such perfidy!

Julian. Stay, Tarik! hear me; for to thee alone
Would I reply.

Tarik. Thou hast replied already.

[*Goes.*

Muza. We, who were enemies, would not inquire
Too narrowly what reasons urged thy wrath
Against thy sovran lord: beneath his flag
The Christians first assail'd us from these shores,
And we seiz'd gladly the first aid we found
To quell a wealthy and a warlike king.
We never held to thee the vain pretence
That 'twas thy quarrel our brave youth espoused,
Thine, who hast wrought us much disgrace and woe.
From perils and from losses here we rest
And drink of the fresh fountain at our feet,
Not madly following such illusive streams
As overspread the dizzy wilderness,
And vanish from the thirst they have seduced.
Ours was the enterprise, the land is ours.
What gain we by our toils, if he escape
Whom we came hither solely to subdue?

Julian. Is there no gain to live in amity?

Muza. The gain of traffickers and idle men;
Courage and zeal expire upon such calms.
Further, what amity can Moors expect
When you have joined your forces?

Julian. From the hour
That he was vanquisht, I have laid aside
All power, all arms.

Muza. How can we trust thee, once
Deceived, and oftener than this once despised?
Thou camest hither with no other aim
Than to deprive Roderigo of his crown
For thy own brow.

Egilona. Julian, base man, 'tis true.
He comes a prince, no warrior, at this hour.

Muza. His sword, O queen, would not avail him now.

Abdalasis. Julian, I feel less anger than regret.
No violence of speech, no obloquy,
No accusation shall escape my lips:
Need there is none, nor reason, to avoid
My questions: if thou value truth, reply.

Hath not Roderigo left the town and camp?
Hath not thy daughter?

Egilona. Past the little brook
Toward the Betis. From a tower I saw
The fugitives, far on their way; they went
Over one bridge, each with arm'd men . . . not half
A league of road between them . . . and had join'd,
But that the olive-groves along the path
Conceal'd them from each other, not from me:
Beneath me the whole level I survey'd,
And, when my eyes no longer could discern
Which track they took, I knew it from the storks
Rising in clouds above the reedy plain.

Musa. Deny it, if thou canst.

Julian. I order'd it.

Abdalasis. None could beside. Lo! things in such a mass
Falling together on observant minds,
Create suspicion and establish proof:
Wanted there fresh . . . why not employ our arms?
Why go alone?

Musa. To parley, to conspire,
To reunite the Spaniards, which we saw,
To give up treaties, close up enmities,
And ratify the deed with Moorish blood.

Julian. Gladly would Spain procure your safe return,
Gladly would pay large treasures for the aid
You brought against oppression.

Musa. Pay she shall
The treasures of her soil, her ports, her youth:
If she resist, if she tumultuously
Call forth her brigands and we lose a man,
Dreadful shall be our justice; war shall rage
Through every city, hamlet, house, and field,
And, universal o'er the gasping land,
Depopulation.

Julian. They shall rue the day
Who dare these things.

Musa. Let order then prevail.
In vain thou sendest far away thy child,
Thy counsellor the metropolitan,
And Sisabert: prudence is mine no less.
Divide with us our conquests, but the king
Must be deliver'd up.

Julian. Never by me.

Musa. False then were thy reproaches, false thy grief.

Julian. O Egilona! were thine also feign'd?

Abdalazis. Say, lovely queen, neglectful of thy charms
Turn'd he his eyes toward the young Covilla?
Did he pursue her to the mad excess
Of breaking off her vows to Sisabert,
And marrying her, against the Christian law?

Musa. Did he prefer so?

Abdalazis. Could he prefer
To Egilona . . .

Egilona. Her! the child Covilla?
Eternal hider of a foolish face,
Incapable of anything but shame,
To me? old man! to me? O Abdalazis!
No: he but follow'd with slow pace my hate.
And can not pride check these unseemly tears.

[Goes.

Musa. The most offended, an offended woman,
A wife, a queen, is silent on the deed.

Abdalazis. Thou disingenuous and ignoble man,
Spreading these rumours! sending into exile
All those their blighting influence injured most:
And whom? thy daughter and adopted son,
The chieftains of thy laws and of thy faith.
Call any witnesses, proclaim the truth,
And set at last thy heart, thy fame, at rest.

Julian. Not, if I purpos'd or desired to live,
My own dishonour would I e'er proclaim
Amid vindictive and reviling foes.

Musa. Calling us foes, avows he not his guilt?
Condemns he not the action we condemn,
Owning it his, and owning it dishonour?
'Tis well my cares prest forward, and struck home.

Julian. Why smilest thou? I never saw that smile
But it portended an atrocious deed.

Musa. After our manifold and stern assaults,
With every tower and battlement destroy'd,
The walls of Ceuta still were strong enough . . .

Julian. For what? who boasted now her brave defence,
Or who forbad your entrance after peace?

Musa. None: for who could? their engines now arose
To throw thy sons into the arms of death.
For this erect they their proud crests again.
Mark him at last turn pale before a Moor.

Julian. Imprudent have they been, their youth shall plead.

Abdalazis. O father! could they not have been detain'd?

Musa. Son, thou art safe, and wert not while they lived.

Abdalazis. I fear'd them not.

Musa. And therefore wert not safe:

Under their star the blooming Egilona
Would watch for thee the nuptial lamp in vain.

Julian. Never, oh never, hast thou workt a wile
So barren of all good! Speak out at once,
What hopest thou by striking this alarm?
It shocks my reason, not my fears or fondness.

Musa. Be happy then as ignorance can be;
Soon wilt thou hear it shouted from our ranks.
Those who once hurl'd defiance o'er our heads,
Scorning our arms, and scoffing at our faith,
The nightly wolf hath visited, unscared,
And loathed them as her prey; for famine first,
Achieving in few days the boast of years,
Sank their young eyes and open'd us the gates:
Ceuta, her port, her citadel, is ours.

Julian. Blest boys! inhuman as thou art, what guilt
Was theirs?

Musa. Their father's.

Julian. O support me, Heaven!
Against this blow! all others I have borne.
Ermenegild! thou mightest, sure, have lived!
A father's name awoke no dread of thee!
Only thy mother's early bloom was thine!
There dwelt on Julian's brow . . . thine was serene . . .
The brighten'd clouds of elevated souls,
Fear'd by the most below: those who lookt up
Saw at their season in clear signs advance
Rapturous valour, calm solicitude,
All that impatient youth would press from age,
Or sparing age sigh and detract from youth:
Hence was his fall! my hope! myself! my Julian!
Alas! I boasted . . . but I thought on him,
Inheritor of all . . . all what? my wrongs . . .
Follower of me . . . and whither? to the grave . . .
Ah no: it should have been so years far hence!
Him at this moment I could pity most,
But I most prided in him; now I know
I loved a name, I doated on a shade.
Sons! I approach the mansions of the just,
And my arms clasp you in the same embrace,
Where none shall sever you . . . and do I weep!
And do they triumph o'er my tenderness!
I had forgotten my inveterate foes
Everywhere nigh me, I had half forgotten
Your very murderers, while I thought on you:
For, O my children, ye fill all the space

My soul would wander o'er . . . O bounteous heaven !
 There is a presence, if the well-beloved
 Be torn from us by human violence,
 More intimate, pervading, and complete,
 Than when they lived and spoke like other men ;
 And their pale images are our support
 When reason sinks, or threatens to desert us.
 I weep no more . . . pity and exultation
 Sway and console me : are they . . . no ! . . . both dead ?

Musa. Ay, and unsepulchred.

Julian. Nor wept nor seen
 By any kindred and far-following eye ?

Musa. Their mother saw them, if not dead, expire.

Julian. O cruelty . . . to them indeed the least !

My children, ye are happy . . . ye have lived
 Of heart unconquer'd, honour unimpair'd,
 And died, true Spaniards, loyal to the last.

Musa. Away with him.

Julian. Slaves ! not before I lift

My voice to heaven and man : though enemies
 Surround me, and none else, yet other men
 And other times shall hear : the agony
 Of an oppress and of a bursting heart
 No violence can silence ; at its voice
 The trumpet is o'erpower'd, and glory mute,
 And peace and war hide all their charms alike.
 Surely the guests and ministers of heaven
 Scatter it forth through all the elements,
 So suddenly, so widely, it extends,
 So fearfully men breathe it, shuddering
 To ask or fancy how it first arose.

Musa. Yes, they shall shudder : but will that, henceforth,
 Molest my privacy, or shake my power ?

Julian. Guilt hath pavilions, but no privacy.
 The very engine of his hatred checks
 The torturer in his transport of revenge,
 Which, while it swells his bosom, shakes his power,
 And raises friends to his worst enemy.

Musa. Where now are thine ? will they not curse the day
 That gave thee birth, and hiss thy funeral !
 Thou hast left none who could have pitied thee.

Julian. Many, nor those alone of tenderer mould,
 For me will weep ; many, alas, through me !
 Already I behold my funeral ;
 The turbid cities wave and swell with it,
 And wrongs are lost in that day's pageantry :

Opprest and desolate, the countryman
 Receives it like a gift; he hastens home,
 Shows where the hoof of Moorish horse laid waste
 His narrow croft and winter garden-plot,
 Sweetens with fallen pride his children's lore,
 And points their hatred, but applauds their tears.
 Justice, who came not up to us through life,
 Loves to survey our likeness on our tombs,
 When rivalry, malevolence, and wrath,
 And every passion that once storm'd around,
 Is calm alike without them as within.
 Our very chains make the whole world our own,
 Bind those to us who else had past us by,
 Those at whose call, brought down to us, the light
 Of future ages lives upon our name.

Musa. I may accelerate that meteor's fall,
 And quench that idle ineffectual light,
 Without the knowledge of thy distant world.

Julian. My world and thine are not that distant one.
 Is age less wise, less merciful, than grief,
 To keep this secret from thee, poor old man?
 Thou canst not lessen, canst not aggravate
 My sufferings, canst not shorten or extend
 Half a sword's length between my God and me.
 I thank thee for that better thought than fame,
 Which none however, who deserve, despise,
 Nor lose from view till all things else are lost.

Abdalasis. Julian, respect his age, regard his power.
 Many who fear'd not death, have dragg'd along
 A piteous life in darkness and in chains.
 Never was man so full of wretchedness
 But something may be suffered after all,
 Perhaps in what clings round his breast and helps
 To keep the ruin up, which he amid
 His agony and frenzy overlooks,
 But droops upon at last, and clasps, and dies.

Julian. Although a Muza send far underground,
 Into the quarry whence the palace rose,
 His mangled prey, climes alien and remote
 Mark and record the pang. While overhead
 Perhaps he passes on his favourite steed,
 Less heedful of the misery he inflicts
 Than of the expiring sparkle from a stone,
 Yet we, alive or dead, have fellow-men
 If ever we have served them, who collect
 From prisons and from dungeons our remains,

And bear them in their bosom to their sons.
 Man's only relics are his benefits ;
 These, be there ages, be there worlds, between,
 Retain him in communion with his kind :
 Hence is our solace, our security,
 Our sustenance, till heavenly truth descends,
 Covering with brightness and beatitude
 The frail foundations of these humbler hopes,
 And, like an angel guiding us, at once
 Leaves the loose chain and iron gate behind.

Musa. Take thou my justice first, then hope for theirs.
 I, who can bend the living to my will,
 Fear not the dead, and court not the unborn :
 Their arm will never reach me, nor shall thine.

Abdalasis. Pity, release him, pardon him, my father !
 Forget how much thou hatest perfidy,
 Think of him, once so potent, still so brave,
 So calm, so self-dependent in distress,
 I marvel at him : hardly dare I blame
 When I behold him fallen from so high,
 And so exalted after such a fall.
 Mighty must that man be, who can forgive
 A man so mighty ; seize the hour to rise,
 Another never comes : O say, my father !
 Say, " Julian, be my enemy no more."
 He fills me with a greater awe than e'er
 The field of battle, with himself the first,
 When every flag that waved along our host
 Droopt down the staff, as if the very winds
 Hung in suspense before him. Bid him go
 And peace be with him, or let me depart.
 Lo ! like a god, sole and inscrutable,
 He stands above our pity.

Julian. For that wish . .
 Vain as it is, 'tis virtuous . . O, for that,
 However wrong thy censure and thy praise,
 Kind Abdalasis ! mayst thou never feel
 The rancour that consumes thy father's breast,
 Nor want the pity thou hast sought for mine !

Musa. Now hast thou seal'd thy doom.

Julian. And thou thy crimes.

Abdalasis. O father ! heed him not : those evil words.
 Leave neither blight nor blemish : let him go.

Musa. A boy, a very boy art thou indeed !
 One who in early day would sally out
 To chase the lion, and would call it sport,

But, when more wary steps had closed him round,
Slink from the circle, drop the toils, and blanch
Like a lithe plant from under snow in spring.

Abdalasis. He who ne'er shrank from danger, might shrink
now,

And ignominy would not follow here.

Musa. Peace, Abdalasis! How is this? he bears
Nothing that warrants him invulnerable:
Shall I then shrink to smite him? shall my fears
Be greatest at the blow that ends them all?
Fears? no! 'tis justice, fair, immutable,
Whose measured step at times advancing nigh
Appalls the majesty of kings themselves.
O were he dead! though then revenge were o'er!

FIFTH ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

Officer. Thy wife, Count Julian!

Julian. Speak!

Officer. Is dead.

Julian. Adieu

Earth! and the humblest of all earthly hopes,
To hear of comfort, though to find it vain.
Thou murderer of the helpless! shame of man!
Shame of thy own base nature! 'tis an act
He who could perpetrate could not avow,
Stain'd, as he boasts to be, with innocent blood,
Deaf to reproach and blind to retribution.

Officer. Julian! be just; 'twill make thee less unhappy.
Grief was her end: she held her younger boy
And wept upon his cheek; his naked breast
By recent death now hardening and inert,
Slipt from her knee; again with frantic grasp
She caught it, and it weigh'd her to the ground:
There lay the dead.

Julian. She?

Officer. And the youth her son.

Julian. Receive them to thy peace, eternal God!
O soother of my hours, while I beheld
The light of day, and thine! adieu, adieu!
And, my Covilla! dost thou yet survive?
Yes, my lost child, thou livest yet . . . in shame!
O agony, past utterance! past thought!
That throwest death, as some light idle thing,
With all its terrors, into dust and air,

I will endure thee ; I, whom heaven ordain'd
Thus to have serv'd beneath my enemies,
Their conqueror, thus to have revisited
My native land with vengeance and with woe.
Henceforward shall she recognise her sons,
Impatient of oppression or disgrace,
And rescue them, or perish ; let her hold
This compact, written with her blood and mine.
Now follow me : but tremble : years shall roll
And wars rage on, and Spain at last be free.

ANDREA OF HUNGARY, GIOVANNA OF NAPLES,
AND FRA RUPERT: A TRILOGY.

ANDREA OF HUNGARY.

CHARACTERS.

ANDREA. FRA RUPERT. CARACCIOLI. CARAFFA. BOCCACCIO. MAXIMIN, *a Soldier*. KLAPWEATH, ZINGA, PSEIN, *Hungarian Officers*. PAGE. GARISENDO, *a Peasant*. GIOVANNA, *Queen*. SANCIA, *Queen Dowager*. MARIA, *Sister of Giovanna*. MARIA OF SICILY, *Half-sister*. FIAMMETTA. FILIPPA, *Foster-mother*. PETRONILLA, *a Peasant*.

PROLOGUE.

My verse was for thine eyes alone,
Alone by them was it repaid;
And still thine ear records the tone
Of thy grey minstrel, thoughtful maid!

Amid the pomps of regal state,
Where thou, O Rose! art call'd to move,
Thee only Virtue can elate,
She only guide thy steps to Love.

Sometimes, when dark is each saloon,
Dark every lamp that crown'd the Seine,
Memory hangs low Amalfi's moon
And lights thee o'er Salerno's plain,

And onward, where Giovanna bore
Keen anguish from envenom'd tongues:
Her fame my pages shall restore,
Thy pity shall requite her wrongs.

ACT I.

SCENE I. PALACE AT NAPLES.

ANDREA *and* GIOVANNA.

Andrea. What say you now, Giovanna! shall we go
And conquer France? Heigho? I am sadly idle;
My mighty mind wants full activity.

Giovanna. Andrea! be contented; stay at home;
Conquer? you've conquer'd me.

Andrea. Ah rebel queen!
I doubt it: we have had war first, however,
And parleys, and all that.

Giovanna. You might have more
Before you conquer the strong cities there.

Andrea. England, they tell me, hath as much of France
As France hath. Some imagine that Provenza
Is half-and-half French land. How this may be
I can not tell; I am no theologian.

Giovanna. . . in your ear . . I have a mind
To ride to Paris, and salute the king,
And pull him by the beard, and make him fight.

Giovanna. Know that French beards have stiffer hairs than
German,*
And crackle into flame at the first touch.

Andrea. 'Sblood! like black cats! But only in the dark?

Giovanna. By night or day, in city or in field.

Andrea. I never knew it: let the Devil lug them
For me then! they are fitter for his fist.
Sure, of all idle days the marriage-day
Is idlest: even the common people run
About the streets, not knowing what to do,
As if they came from wedding too, poor souls!
This fancy set me upon conquering France.

Giovanna. And one hour only after we are united?

SCENE II.

MARIA enters.

Andrea. Maria! where are you for? France or Naples?
She heard, she smiled . . Here's whispering . . This won't do . .

She may have secrets . . they all have . . I'll leave 'em. [*Goes.*
[*Going; but stops, pacified.*

Giovanna. Unsisterly! unfriendly!

Maria. Peace! Giovanna!

Giovanna. That word has sign'd it. I have sworn to love
him.

Maria. Ah, what a vow!

Giovanna. The harder to perform
The greater were the glory: I will earn it.

Maria. How can we love . .

Giovanna (interrupting). Mainly, by hearing none

* Hungary and Germany were hostile.

Decry the object ; then, by cherishing
 The good we see in it, and overlooking
 What is less pleasant in the paths of life.
 All have some virtue if we leave it them
 In peace and quiet ; all may lose some part
 By sifting too minutely bad and good.
 The tenderer and the timider of creatures
 Often desert the brood that has been handled
 And turn'd about, or indiscreetly lookt at.
 The slightest touches, touching constantly,
 Irritate and inflame.

Maria. Giovanna mine !

These rhetoric-roses are supremely sweet,
 But hold ! the jar is full. I promise you
 I will not steal up with a mind to snatch,
 Or pry too closely where you bid me not . .
 But for the nest you talk about . .

Giovanna. For shame !

What nest ?

Maria. That nest your blushes gleam upon.
 O ! I will watch each twig, each feather there,
 And, if my turning, tossing, hugging, does it,
 Woe to Giovanna's little bird, say I.

Giovanna. Seriously, my sweet sister !

Maria (*interrupting*). Seriously
 Indeed ! What briars ere we come to that !

Giovanna. I am accustom'd to Andrea's ways,
 And see much good in him.

Maria. I see it too.

Giovanna. Fix upon that your eyes ; they will grow brighter,
Maria, for each beauty they discover.

SCENE III. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ANDREA, FRA RUPERT.

Andrea. Well met again, Fra Rupert ! Why not, though,
 At church with us ? By this humility
 You lost the prettiest sight that ever was.

Fra Rupert. I know what such sights are.

Andrea. What ?

Fra Rupert. Vanity.

Andrea. Exact the thing that everybody likes.

Fra Rupert. You young and heedless !

Andrea. We pass lightly over,
 And run on merrily quite to the end ;

The graver stumble, break their knees, and curse it :
 Which are the wiser ? Had you seen the church !
 The finest lady ever drest for court
 A week-day peasant to her ! By to-morrow
 There's not a leg of all the crowd in Naples
 But will stand stiff and ache with this day's tiptoe ;
 There's not a throat will drop its paste-tape down
 Without some soreness from such roaring cheers ;
 There's not a husband but whose ears will tingle
 Under his consort's claw this blessed night
 For sighing " What an angel is Giovanna ! "

Fra Rupert. Go, go ! I can not hear such ribaldry.

Andrea. Rather should you have heard, as there you might,
 Quarrelsome blunder-headed drums, o'erpower'd
 By pelting cymbals ; then complaining flutes,
 And boy-voiced fifes, lively and smart and shrill ;
 Then timbrels, where tall fingers trip, but trip
 In the right place, and run along again ;
 Then blustering trumpets, wonder-wafting horns,
Evivas from their folks, *hurrahs* from ours,
 And songs that pour into both ears long life
 And floods of glory and victory for ever.

Fra Rupert. What signify these fooleries ? In one word,
 Andrea, art thou king ?

Andrea. I fancy so.

The people never give such hearty shouts
 Saving for kings and blunders.

Fra Rupert. Son ! beware,
 Lest while they make the one they make the other.

Andrea. How must I guard against it ?

Fra Rupert. Twelve whole years
 Constantly here together, all the time
 Since we left Hungary, and not one day
 But I have labour'd to instill into thee,
 Andrea ! how wise kings must feel and act.

Andrea. But, father, who let *you* into the secret ?

Fra Rupert. I learnt it in the cloister.

Andrea. Then no doubt
 The secret is worth knowing ; many are
 (Or songs and fables equally are false)
 Among those whisper'd there.

Fra Rupert. Methinks, my son,
 Such words are lighter than beseems crown'd heads,
 As thine should be, and shall be, if thou wilt.

Andrea. Ay, father, but it is not so as yet ;
 Else would it jingle to another crown,

With what a face beneath it! What a girl
Is our Giovanna!

Fra Rupert. By the saints above!

I thought it was a queen, and not a girl.

Andrea. There is enough in her for both at once.

A queen it shall be then the whole day long.

[*FRA RUPERT, impatient.*

Nay, not a word, good Frate! the whole day;

Ave-Maria ends it; does it not?

I am so glad, so gamesome, so light-hearted,

So fond, I (sure!) am long steps off the throne.

Fra Rupert. And ever may'st be, if thou art remiss
In claiming it.

Andrea. I can get anything

From my Giovanna. You would hardly guess

What she has given me. Look here!

Fra Rupert. A book?

Andrea. 'King Solomon.'

Fra Rupert. His *Song*? To seculars?

I warrant she would teach it, and thou learn it.

Andrea. I'll learn it through, I'll learn it every verse.

Where does the *Song* begin? I see no rhymes.

Fra Rupert. 'The Proverbs!' Not so bad!

Andrea. Are songs then proverbs?

And what is this hard word?

Fra Rupert. 'Ecclesiastes.'

Andrea. But look! you have not seen the best of it.

What pretty pictures! what broad rubies! what

Prodigious pearls! seas seem to roll within,

And azure skies, as ever bent above,

Push their pink clouds, half-shy, to mingle with 'em.

Fra Rupert. I am not sure this book would do thee harm,
But better let me first examine it. [*He takes it.*

Andrea. You shall not have it; give it me again.

Fra Rupert. Loose it, I say, Andrea!

Andrea. I say no!

Fra Rupert. To me?

Andrea. Dost think I'd say it to Giovanna?

Beside, she gave it me: she has read in it

With her own eyes, has written Latin in it

With her own fingers, . . . for who else could write

Distinctly such small letters? . . . You yourself,

Who rarely have occasion for much Latin,

Might swear them to be Latin in ten minutes.

Another thing . . . the selfsame perfume clings

About those pages as about her bosom.

Fra Rupert (starts). Abomination! Know all that!

Andrea. Like matins.

Thence, tho' she turn'd quite round, I saw her take it
To give it me. Another thing . . . the people
Bragg'd of my metal half an hour ago,
And I will show I have it, like the best.
Another thing . . . forgettest thou, Fra Rupert,
I am a husband?

Fra Rupert. Seven years old thou wert one.*

Andrea. Ha, but! ha, but! seven years upon seven years
Could not make me the man I am to-day.

Fra Rupert. Nor seventy upon seven a tittle wiser.

Andrea. Why did not you then make me while you could?
You taught me nothing, and would let none teach me,
No, not our king himself, the wisest man
In his dominions, nor more wise than willing.
Forsooth! you made a promise to my father
That nobody should filch my faith and morals,
No taint of learning eat skin-deep into me!
And good king Robert said, "If thus my brother
Must have it . . . if such promise was exacted . . ."

Fra Rupert. All have more knowledge than they well employ.
Upbraidest thou thy teacher, guardian, father?

Andrea. Fathers may be, alas! too distant from us,
Guardians may be too close . . . but, teacher? teacher?

Fra Rupert. Silence!

Andrea (retreating). He daunts me: yet, some day, *cospetto!*

Fra Rupert. What mutterest thou?

Andrea (to himself). I will be brave, please God!

Fra Rupert (suppressing rage). Obstinate sinners are alone
unpardon'd:

I may forgive thee after meet repentance,
But must confer with thee another time
On that refractory untoward spirit.

Andrea (to himself). He was then in the right (it seems) at last.

Fra Rupert. I hear some footsteps coming hitherward.

SCENE IV.

GIOVANNA and FILIPPA.

Fra Rupert (turns his back to them). O those pestiferous women!

Andrea. Ay, well spoken.

The most religious of religious men

* Andrea and Giovanna were contracted when he was seven, she five.

Lifts up his arms and eyes, my sweet Giovanna,
Before your wond'rous charms.

[*The Friar looks at him with rage and scorn.*

Giovanna. Simple Andrea!

Are they more wond'rous than they were before?
Or are they more apparent now the robes
Are laid aside, and all those gems that made
My hair stand back, chiefly that mischievous
Malignant ruby (some fierce dragon's eye
Turn'd into stone) which hurt your finger so
With its vile crooked pin, for touching me,
When you should have but lookt, and not quite that.

Fra Rupert (who had listened). Come hither; didst thou hear her?

Andrea. Every word;

And bear no rancour to her, though she scolds.

Fra Rupert. She might have waited twenty years beyond
This day, before she thought of matrimony;
She talks so like a simpleton.

Andrea. She does

Indeed: yet, father! it is very true:
The pin did prick me: she is no simpleton
As far as memory goes.

[*The Friar looks up, then walks about impatiently.*

Now, won't you mind me?

She is but very young, scarce seventeen;
When she is two years older, just my age,
Then shall you see her! more like me perhaps.
She might have waited . . . you say well . . . and would
Willingly, I do think; but I am wiser,
And warmer. Our Hungarian blood (ay, Frate!)
Is not squeez'd out of March anemones.

Filippa. Since, friar Rupert! here are met together
The lofty and the lowly, they and we,
If your austerity of life forbade
To mingle with the world's festivities,
Indulge, I pray you, in that luxury
Which suits all seasons, sets no day apart,
Excludes from its communion none, how'er
Unworthy, but partakes of God indeed . . .
Indulge in pardon.

Fra Rupert. Does a senechal's
Wife bend before me? Do the proud ones beg?

Filippa. Too proud I may be: even the very humblest
May be too proud. I am, 'tis true, the widow
Of him you mention. Do I beg? I do.
Our queen commands me to remove ill-will.

Fra Rupert. There are commands above the queen's.

Filippa. There are,

O holy man! obey we both at once!

Giovanna (*calls ANDREA*). Husband!

Fra Rupert. And not our king? most noble lady!

Giovanna. He, or I much mistake him, is my husband.

Andrea. Mistake me! not a whit: I am, I am.

Giovanna. If, O my husband! that dear name has power

On your heart as on mine, now when first spoken,

Let what is love between us shed its sweets

A little wider, tho' a little fainter;

Let all our friends this day, all yours, all mine,

Be one another's, and not this day only.

Persuade them.

Andrea. Can I?

Giovanna. You persuaded me.

Andrea. Ay, but you did not hate me; and your head

Is neither grey nor tonsured; these are odds.

I never could imagine well how folks

Who disagree in other things, agree

To make each other angry. What a game!

To toss back burs until the skin is full

On either side! Which wins the stake, I wonder?

Fra Rupert (*bursting away*). I have no patience.

Andrea. I have, now he's gone.

How long were you contriving this grand scheme

To drive away the friar? Do you think

[*Whispers to GIOVANNA.*

He won't come after supper? Does he know

Our chamber?

Giovanna. Hush! Andrea!

Andrea. In good earnest

I fear him, and the fleas about his frock.

Let me go after him: he went in wrath:

He may do mischief, if he thinks it right,

As these religious people often do. [*ANDREA goes.*

Filippa. Happy Andrea! only fleas and friars

Molest him: little he suspects the snares

About his paths; the bitter jealousies

Of Hungary; how pertinaciously

Mail'd hands grasp sceptres, how reluctantly

Loose them; how tempting are our milder clime

And gentler nation! He deserves our pity.

Giovanna. O! more than pity. If our clime, our nation,

Bland, constant, kind, congenial with each other,

Were granted him, how much more was withheld!

Sterile the soil is not, but sadly waste.
 What buoyant spirits and what pliant temper !
 How patient of reproof ! how he wipes off
 All injuries before they harden on him,
 And wonders at affronts, and doubts they can be !
 Then, his wild quickness ! O the churl that bent it
 Into the earth, colourless, shapeless, thriftless,
 Fruitless, for ever ! Had he been my brother,
 I should have wept all my life over him ;
 But, being my husband, one hypocrisy
 I must put on, one only ever will I.
 Others must think, by my observance of him,
 I hold him prudent, penetrating, firm,
 No less than virtuous : I must place myself
 In my own house (now indeed his) below him.

Filippa. I almost think you love him.

Giovanna. He has few
 Even small faults, which small minds spy the soonest ;
 He has, what those will never see nor heed,
 Wit of bright feather, but of broken wing ;
 No stain of malice, none of spleen, about it.
 For this, and more things nearer . . . for the worst
 Of orphanage, the cruellest of frauds,
 Stealth of his education while he played
 Nor fancied he could want it ; for our ties
 Of kindred ; for our childhood spent together ;
 For those dear faces that once smiled upon us
 At the same hour, in the same balcony ;
 Even for the plants we rear'd in partnership,
 Or spoil'd in quarrel, I do love Andrea.
 But, from his counsellors ! . . .

Filippa. We shall elude
 Their clumsy wiles perhaps. The youth, methinks,
 Is tractable.

Giovanna. May wise men guide him then !
 It lies beyond my duty.

Filippa. But the wise
 Are not the men who guide the tractable.
 The first bold hand that seizes, holds them fast ;
 And the best natures melt into the bad
 'Mid dances and carousals.

Giovanna. Let Andrea
 Be sparing of them !

Filippa. Evil there may be
 Where evil men preside, but greatly worse
 Is proud austerity than princely glee.

Giovanna. Heaven guard us! I have entered on a course
Beleaguered with dense dangers : but that course
Was first ordained in earth, and now in heaven.
My father's spirit filled his father's breast,
And peace and union in our family
(They both foresaw) would be secured by ours.

Filippa. She who forgets her parent will forego
All later duties : yes, when love has lost
The sound of its spring-head, it grows impure,
Tortuous, and spent at last in barren sand.
I owe these generous kings the bread I broke,
The letters I pickt up : no vile sea-weed
Had perisht more neglected, but for them.
They would heap affluence on me ; they did heap it ;
Next, honours : for these only I am ungrateful.

Giovanna (smiling). Ungrateful ? thou ? *Filippa !*

Filippa. Most ungrateful.
With humble birth and humbler intellect
The puff-ball might have bounced along the plain
And blinded the beholder with its dust :
But intellect let down on humble birth
Writhes under titles, shrinks from every glance,
At every question turns one fibre fresh
For torture, and, unpullied and adrift,
Burns its dull heart away in smouldering scorn.

Giovanna. Where no ethereal spirit fills the breast . .

Filippa. . . Honours are joys great as such breast can hold.

Giovanna. The happy then in courts are numberless ;
We hear the contrary.

Filippa. Never believe
This, nor another ill report of them.

Giovanna. What ?

Filippa. That the great are not great to their valets ;
'Tis but their valets who can find their greatness.

Giovanna. I know that you have enemies.

Filippa. Thank God !
I might have else forgotten what I am,
And what he gave me ere he placed me here.

Giovanna. I never shall, *Filippa !*

Filippa. Think of those
Who rais'd our souls above us, not of me.
Giovanna. Oh ! if my soul hath risen, if the throbs
Of gratitude now tell it me, if they
Who rais'd it must be thought of . . to my heart,
Filippa ! for the heart alone can think.

Filippa. I first received thee in these arms ; these arms
Shall loose thee last of living things, *Giovanna.*

ACT II. †

SCENE I. IN THE PALACE.

GIOVANNA, FIAMMETTA, MARIA.

Maria. And now, Fiammetta, tell me whence that name
Which tickles thee so.

Fiammetta. Tell indeed! not I.

Maria (to GIOVANNA). Sister! you may command.

Giovanna. Command a sister?

Secrets are to be won, but not commanded.

I never heard the name before. . *Fiammetta* . .

Is that it?

Maria. That is it.

Fiammetta. For shame, *Maria*!

Never will I entrust you with a secret.

Maria. I do believe you like this one too well
Ever to let another mingle with it.

Fiammetta (to herself). I do indeed, alas!

Giovanna. Some gallant knight

Has carried off her scarf and bared her heart.

But to this change of name I must withhold

Assent, I like *Maria* so much better.

Fiammetta (points to MARIA). There is *Maria* yet.

Giovanna. But where twin-roses

Have grown so long together, to snap one

Might make the other droop.

Fiammetta. Ha! now, *Maria*!

Maria! you are springed, my little quail!

Giovanna. *Fiammetta*! if our father were here with us,
He would suspect some poet friend of his,
Dealer in flames and darts, their only trade,
Enchanted his Sicilian.

Maria. Ho! ho! ho!

Proserpine never blusht such damask blushes

When *she* was caught.

Fiammetta. I am quite cool.

Maria. The clouds

May be quite cool when they are quite as red;

Girls' faces, I suspect, are somewhat less so.

[FIAMMETTA runs off.]

Giovanna. *Maria*! dear *Maria*! She is flown.

Is the poor girl in love then?

Maria. Till this hour

I thought it but a fancy, such as all

We children have : ye all choose one ; but, sure,
To run out of the room at the mere shadow !

Giovanna. What would *you* do ?

Maria. Wait till he came himself.

Giovanna. And then ?

Maria. Think seriously of running off,
Until I were persuaded it was civil.

SCENE II.

Andrea. What have ye done to little Sicily ?
She ran so swiftly by me, and pusht back
My hand so smartly when I would have stopt her,
I think you must have vext her plaguily
Among you.

Maria. She was vext, but not by us.

Andrea. Yes, many girls are vext to-day. One bride
Sheds fifty thorns from each white rose she wears.
I did not think of that. (*To MARIA.*) *You* did, no doubt ?

Maria. I wear white roses too, as well as she :

Our queen's can have no thorns for us.

Andrea. Not one ?

Maria. No, nor for any in this happy realm.

Andrea. Ah now ! this happy realm ! Some people think
That I could make it happier.

Giovanna. I rejoice
To hear it.

Andrea. Are you glad, my little bride ?

Giovanna. Most glad. O never disappoint their hopes !
The people are so kind ! they love us so !

Andrea. They are a merry race : ay, very crickets,
Chirruping, leaping. What they eat, God knows ;
Sunshine and cinders, may be : he has sent
Plenty of these, and they are satisfied.

Giovanna. Should *we* be, if they are ?

Andrea. O then ! a boon !
To make them happy all their lives.

Giovanna. The boon
To make them happier Heaven alone can grant.
Hearken ! If some oppressions were removed,
Beyond my strength to manage, it were done.

Andrea. Nothing so easy. Not your strength indeed,
But mine, could push a buffalo away.
I have a little favour to request.

Giovanna. Speak.

Andrea. Give me then this kingdom, only this.
I do not covet mountains to the north,

Nor cities over cities farther west,
 Casal or Monferrato or Saluzzo,
 Asti or Coni, Ceva or Torino,
 Where that great river runs which spouts from heaven,
 Nor Aix nor Toulon, nor Marseille nor Nice
 Nor Avignon, where our good pope sits perch'd ;
 I only want this tidy little kingdom,
 To make it happy with this sword upon it.

Giovanna. The people and their laws alone can give it.

Andrea. Well, we can make the laws.

Giovanna. And people too ?

Andrea. Giovanna ! I do think that smile could make
 A thousand peoples from the dullest clay,
 And mould them to thy will.

Giovanna. Pure poetry !

Andrea. Don't say it ! or they knock me on the head !
 I ought to be contented : but they would
 Insist upon it. I have ask'd : here ends
 My duty : I don't want it for myself . . .
 And yet those cities lookt like strings of bird-eggs,
 And tempted me above my strength. I only
 Repent of learning all their names for nothing.
 Let them hang where they are.

Giovanna. Well said.

Andrea. Who wants 'em ?

I like these pictures better. What a store !
 Songs, proverbs, and a word as hard as flint,
 Enough for fifty friars to ruminate
 Amid their cheese and cobnuts after dinner,
 Read it me.

Giovanna. Which ?

Giovanna. ' *Ecclesiastes.* '

Andrea. Right !

[*ANDREA points.*]

As you pronounce it, scarce a word of ours
 In Hungary is softer. What a tongue !
 Round, juicy, sweet, and soluble, as cherries.
 When Frate Rupert utter'd the same word,
 It sounded just as if his beard and breast,
 And all which there inhabit, had turn'd round
 Into his throat, to rasp and riddle it.

I never shall forget *Ecclesiastes* !

Only two words I know are pleasanter.

Giovanna. And which are they ?

Andrea (*saluting her*). *Giovanna* and *Carina*.

Maria. Unmanner'd prince !

Andrea. Now the white rose sheds thorns.

SCENE III.

SANCIA and FILIPPA.

Sancia (smiling). Step-mothers are not always quite at home
With their queen-daughters.

Giovanna. Yet queen-mothers are.
Step-mother you have never been to me,
But kindest, fondest, tenderest, truest mother.

Maria. Are we not all your children ?

Sancia. All. Where then
Is fled our lively Sicily ?

Giovanna. She is gone
To her own chamber.

Maria. To read poetry.

Sancia. Where poetry is only light or flattering
She might read some things worse, and many better.
I never loved the heroes of Romance,
And hope they glide not in among the leaves.

Maria. And love you then their contraries ?

Sancia. Those better.
What clever speech, Maria, dost thou ponder ?
I see we differ.

Maria. Rather.

Sancia. Why so grave ?
Surely no spur is tangled in *thy* hem !

Maria. No, my regrets were all for you. What pity
Andrea dropt upon our globe too late ;
A puissant antipode to all such heroes !

Giovanna (smiling). Intolerable girl ! sad jealous creature !

Sancia. Where is he ? I was seeking him.

Maria. There now !

Sancia. Or else I should not have return'd so soon
After our parting at the Benediction.

[*Goes.*

Maria. Sister ! I fear my little flippancy
Hurried Queen Sancia : why just now want *sposo* ?

Giovanna. She did not smile, as you do, when she went.
Fond as she is, her smiles are faint this morning.
A sorrowing thought, pure of all gloom, o'erspread
That saintly face.

Maria. It did indeed.

Giovanna. She loves
Us all, she loves our people too, most kindly.

Maria. Seeing none other than Hungarian troops
At church about us, deeply did she sigh
And say " Ah ! where are ours ? "

Giovanna. You pain me sadly.
 Queens, O Maria! have two hearts for sorrow;
 One sinks upon our Naples. Whosoever
 I gaze ('tis often) on her bay, so bright
 With sun-wove meshes, idle multitudes
 Of little plashing waves; when air breathes o'er it
 Mellow with sound and fragrance, of such purity
 That the blue hills seem coming nearer, nearer,
 As I look forth at them, and tossing down
 Joyance for joyance to the plains below . . .
 To think what mannerless, unshorn, harsh-tongued
 Barbarians from the Danube and the Drave
 Infest them, I cast up my eyes to Heaven
 Impatiently, despondently, and ask
 Are such the guests for such festivities?
 But shall they dare enthral my poor Andrea?
 Send, send for him: I would not he were harm'd,
 Much less degraded. O for ministers
 To guide my counsels and protect my people!
 I would call round me all the good and wise.

Sancia (returning). Daughter! no palace is too small to hold
 them.

The good love other places, love the fields,
 And ripen the pale harvest with their prayers.
 Solitude, solitude, so dread a curse
 To princes, such a blight to sycophants,
 Is *their* own home, their healthy thoughts grow in it.
 The wise avoid all our anxieties:
 The cunning, with the tickets of the wise,
 Push for the banquet, seize each vacant chair,
 Gorge, pat their spaniel, and fall fast asleep.

Giovanna. Ah then what vigils are reserved for me!

Maria. Hark! spears are grounded.

Giovanna. Officer! who comes?

Officer. Lady! the friar mounts the stairs; behind him
 Those potent lords, Caraffa and Caraccioli.

Giovanna. Your chair, Queen Sancia, stands unoccupied:
 We must be seated to receive the lords.
 Is it not so?

Sancia. The queen must.

Giovanna. One queen only?

The younger first? we can not thus reverse
 The laws of nature for the whims of court.

[SANCIA is seated.]

There's our kind mother! Just in time! They come.

SCENE IV.

FRA RUPERT, CARAFFA, and CARACCIOLI.

Lady! these nobles bring me with them hither,
Fearing they might not win an audience
On what concerns the welfare of the state,
In such an hour of such a day as this.

Giovanna. Speak, gentlemen! You have much wronged yourselves,

And me a little, by such hesitation.
No day, methinks, no hour, is half so proper,
As when the crown is placed upon my brow,
To hear what are its duties.

Caraffa. Gracious queen!

We come to represent . . .

Fra Rupert (behind). Speak out . . . wrongs . . . rights . . . Religion.

Caraffa (to him). You distract me.

Fra Rupert (to CARACCIOLI). Speak then thou.
See how attentively, how timidly,
She waits for you, and blushes up your void!

Caraccioli. 'Tis therefore I want words.

Fra Rupert. Hear mine then, boys!

[*Walks toward GIOVANNA.*]

Imprest with awe before such majesty,
The hopes of Naples, whom their fathers deem
On this occasion, this gay hour, from high
Nobility, from splendour of equipments,
Beauty of person, gracefulness of mien,
And whatsoever courts are courtly by,
Most fitted, and most likely to prevail
Against those ancient frauds and artifices
Which certain dark offenders weave about them . . .
These unsophisticated youths, foredoom'd
Longest and most impatiently to suffer,
Lay humbly at the footstool of your throne
A list of grievances yet unredrest.

Giovanna. Give it me, gentlemen, we will peruse it Together.

Fra Rupert. They are more than scribe could pen.

Giovanna (to FRA RUPERT). Are they of native or imported growth?

Your Reverence hath some practice in the sorting.
Permit me to fill up your pause, Fra Rupert!
On this occasion, this gay hour, methinks
To urge impatience and foredoom of suffering

Is quite untimely. High nobility
 And splendour of equipment are the last
 Of merits in Caraffas and Caracciolis. [To them.
 The delicacy that deferr'd the tender
 Of your important service, I appreciate,
 Venturing to augur but a brief delay.
 Gentlemen! if your fathers bade you hither,
 I grieve to owe them more than I owe you,
 And trust, when next we see you, half the pleasure,
 Half, if not all, may be your own free gift.
 [She rises, they go.

SCENE V. PALACE GARDEN.

FRA RUPERT, CARAFFA, and CARACCIOLI.

Fra Rupert. The losel!*Caraccioli.* Saints! what graciousness!*Caraffa.* Was ever

So sweet a girl? He is uglier than old Satan,
 Andrea . . . I abhor him worse than ever . . .
 Curse on that Tartar, Turk, Bohemian,
 Hungarian! I could now half-strangle him.

Fra Rupert. We are dismiss.*Caraffa.* My speech might have done wonders.*Fra Rupert.* Now, who (the mischief!) stops a dead man's
 blood?

Wonders! ay truly, wonders it had done!
 Thou wert agape as money-box for mass,
 And wantedst shaking more. What are our gains?

Caraffa. A vision the strain'd eyes can not inclose,
 Or bring again before them from the senses,
 Which clasp it, hang upon it, nor will ever
 Release it, following thro' eternity.

Caraccioli. I can retain her image, hear her words,
 Repeat, and tone them on each fibre here,
 Distinctly still.

Caraffa. Then hast thou neither heart
 Nor brain, Caraccioli! No strife so hard
 As to catch one slight sound, one faintest trace,
 Of the high beauty that rules over us.
 Who ever seized the harmony of heaven,
 Or saw the confine that is nearest earth?

Fra Rupert. I can bear youthful follies, but must check
 The words that run thus wide and point at heaven.
 We must warn laymen fairly off that ground.
 Are ye both mad?

Caraffa. One is; I swear to one :
 I would not be the man that is not so
 For empires girt with gold, worlds starr'd with women :
 A trance is that man's life, a dream be mine !
 Caraccioli's an ice-pit, covered o'er
 With straw and chaff and double-door'd and thatcht,
 And wall'd, the whole dark space, with earthen wall.
 Why ! Frate ! all those groans of thine for heaven ?
 Art toucht ?

Fra Rupert. I have been praying fervently . . .
 Despairingly I fear to say . . . 'twere rash,
 Ungrateful, and ungodly.

Caraffa. He has brought
 The whole Maremma on me at one breath.
 My cold fit now comes over me. But, Frate !
 If we do feel, may we not say we do ?

Fra Rupert. To feel is harm ; to say it, may be none,
 Unless 'tis said with levity like thine.

Caraffa. Ah faith ! I wish 'twere levity ! The pagan
 That heaves up Etna, calls it very differently.
 I think the dog is better off than I am ;
 He groans upon the bed where lies his torment ;
 I very far away from where lies mine.

Fra Rupert. Art thou a Christian ?

Caraffa. Father ! don't be serious.

Fra Rupert. I must be.

Caraffa. Have not I most cause ?

Fra Rupert. Yea truly.

Caraffa. I am not over-given to complain,
 But nettles will sting all . . .

Fra Rupert. . . who put their hands in.
 Caraccioli ! be warn'd by this our friend
 What sufferings may arise from lawless love.
 Thine passeth its due bounds ; it doth, Caraccioli !
 But thou canst conquer every wild desire ;
 A high emprize ! what high emprize but suits
 A true Caraccioli ! We meet again . . .
 I have some warnings, some reproofs, for him.

[CARACCIOLI goes.]

SCENE VI.

FRA RUPERT, CARAFFA.

Fra Rupert. Where walls are living things, have ears, eyes,
 mouths,
 Deemest thou, son Francesco ! I alone
 Heard those most violent words about Andrea ?

Caraffa. What words? I never thought about the man;
 About his wife some little; true enough.
 Some little? criminal it were to say it:
 He who thinks little of such . . . such perfection,
 Has left his thoughts among the worms that creep
 In charnel-houses, among brainless skulls,
 Dry bones, without a speck of blood, a thread
 Of fibre, ribs that never cased a heart.
 The volumes of the doctors of the church
 Could not contain a tithe of it: their clasps,
 Strong enough to make chains for Saracens,
 Their timbers to build argosies, would warp
 And split, if my soul's fire were pent within.

Fra Rupert. Remember, son Francesco! prince Andrea,
 King rather (such the husband of a queen
 Is virtually, and should be) king Andrea
 Lives under my protection.

Caraffa. Well, what then?

Fra Rupert. What? Into mine own ear didst thou not
 breathe

Traitorous threats?

Caraffa. I? Threats? About his queen?

Fra Rupert. Filthy! most filthy!

Caraffa. No, no: wandering thoughts
 Fluttered in that direction; one thought, rather.
 Doves have hot livers.

Fra Rupert. Be adultery
 Bad as it will, yet treason, son Francesco!
 Treason is far more difficult to deal with.

Caraffa. I do suspect it may be.

Fra Rupert. Saidst thou not
 Thou couldst half-strangle that Hungarian?

Caraffa. Spake I so rashly?

Fra Rupert. I am a Hungarian.

Caraffa. Evident: but that noble mien would daunt
 Moor, Usbeck, Abyssinian: and that strength!
 A Switzer bear could not half-strangle it.

Fra Rupert. 'Twere martyrdom, 'twere martyrdom. The life
 Of kings hath swords and scaffolds round about it;
 A word might fling thee on them.

Caraffa. Such a word
 Must fall from holy lips, thenceforth unholy.

Fra Rupert. Guided by me and courage, thou art safe.

ACT III.

SCENE I. IN THE PALACE.

ANDREA *and* FILIPPA.

Andrea. Many the stories you've repeated to me,
Lady Filippa! I have clean forgotten 'em;
But all the bloody giants every girl
Before our bed-time threw into my night-cap,
Lie safe and sound there still.

Filippa. I quite believe
You've not the heart to drive them out, my prince.

Andrea. Not I indeed. And then your sage advice!

Filippa. Is all that too forgotten?

Andrea. No, not all;

But, dear Filippa, now that I am married,
And sovran (one may say) or next door to it,
You must not give me any more advice . . .
Not that I mind it; but to save appearances.

[*She bends: he goes, but returns suddenly.*]

Lady Filippa! lady seneschal!

Filippa. My prince! command me.

Andrea. Solve me one more question.

How happens it (while old men are so wise)
That any foolish thing; advice or story,
We call it an old woman's?

Filippa. Prince Andrea!

I know not as for stories and advice;
I only know, when *we* are disappointed
In any thing, or teased with it, we scoff
And call it an old man's.

Andrea. Ah spiteful sex!

Filippa. Here comes Maria: ask her no such questions.

Andrea. I wish Fra Rupert heard your words.

Filippa. To prove them?

Maria. Give him a nosegay at the door.

Andrea. He spurns

Such luxury.

Maria. Since his arrival here,
Perfumes, they tell me, are more general
And tenfold dearer: everybody wears them
In self-defence: men take them with their daggers;
Laundresses sprinkle them on vilest linen,
Lest they be called uncleanly; round the churches
What once were clouds of incense, now are canopies
Of the same benzoin; kites could not fly thro';
The fainting penitents are prone to catch

At the priest's surplice as he passes by,
And cry, above their prayers to Heaven for mercy,
Stop! stop! turn back! waft me a little yet.

Andrea. The father is indeed more fox than civet,
And stinks out sins like sulphur and stale eggs.
(*To MARIA.*) You will not run away with him?

Maria. Tarantola!
Worse than most venomous tarantola,
He bites, and will not let us dance for it.

SCENE II. IN THE GARDENS OF CAPO DI MONTE.

BOCCACCIO *and* FIAMMETTA.

Fiammetta. I do not know whether it be quite right
To listen, as I have, morn after morn
And evening after evening.

Boccaccio. Are my sighs
Less welcome in the garden and the bower,
Than where loud organ bellow'd them away,
And chorister and waxlight ran between?

Fiammetta. You sadly interrupted me at vespers:
Never do that again, sir! When I pray,
I like to pray with all my heart. Bold man!
Do you dare smile at me?

Boccaccio. The bold man first
Was smiled at; was he not?

Fiammetta. No, no such thing:
But if he was, it was because he sigh'd
At the hot weather he had brought with him.

Boccaccio. At the cold weather he fear'd coming on
He sighed.

Fiammetta. And did it come?

Boccaccio. Too gracious lady!

Fiammetta. Keep *gracious lady* for dull drawing-rooms;
Fiammetta is my name; I would know yours.

Boccaccio. *Giovanni.*

Fiammetta. That I know (*aside*). I ought, alas!
Often with Acciaiuoli and Petrarca
I've seen you walking, but have never dared
To ask your name from them; your house's name
I mean of course; our own names stand for nothing.
You must be somebody of high estate.

Boccaccio. I am not noble.

Fiammetta (*shrinking back*). Oh! . . . then! . . .

Boccaccio. I must go!
That is the sentence, is it not?

Fiammetta (*runs and takes his hand*). Don't tell me.
Thou art not noble: say thou art most noble:
Norman . . . half-Norman . . . quarter-Norman . . . say it.

Boccaccio. Say an untruth?

Fiammetta. Only this one; my heart
Will faint without it. I will swear to think it
A truth, wilt thou but say it. 'Tis a truth:
Thy only falsehood thou hast told already,
Merely to try me. If thou art not noble . . .
Noble thou art, and shalt be!

[*She sobs and pauses: he presses her hand to his bosom.*]

Who gainsays it?

Boccaccio. A merchant's son, no better, is thy slave,
Fiammetta!

Fiammetta (*smiling*). Now art thou disguised indeed.
Come, show me specimens of turquoises,
Amethysts, emeralds, diamonds . . . out with them.

Boccaccio. A merchant's, and poor merchant's son am I;
Gems I have none to offer, but pure love
Proof to the touchstone, to the crucible.

Fiammetta. What then or who is noble, and thou not?
I have heard whispers that myself am not so
Who am king Robert's daughter. We may laugh
At those who are, if thou and I are none.
Thou art my knight, Giovanni! There now; take

[*Giving him her scarf.*]

Thy patent of nobility, and wear it.

Boccaccio (*kisses it*). What other but were cobweb after this?

Fiammetta. Ha! kiss it! but take care you don't kiss me.

[*Runs away.*]

SCENE III. IN THE PALACE.

SANCIA and FILIPPA.

Sancia. Even you, my dear Filippa, are alert
As any of the girls, and giddy too:
You have dropt something now you can not find.

Filippa. I have been busy, looking here and there
To find Andrea.

Sancia. Leave him with his bride,
Until they tire of saying tender things.

Filippa. Untender things, I fear, are going on.
He has been truant to the friar Rupert
Of late, who threatens him with penances
For leaving some injunction unperform'd.
And more perhaps than penances are near:

For sundry captains, sundry nobles, meet
 At friar Anselm's cell; thither had sped
 Fra Rupert. In the garden of Saint Clara
 Voices were heard, and threats; then whispers ran
 Along the walls. They walkt out, one by one,
 Soldiers with shuffling pace unsoldierly,
 Friars with folded hands, invoking heaven,
 And hotly calm as night ere burst Vesuvius.

Sancia. Beyond the slight affronts all princes bear
 From those who miss what others have obtain'd,
 Andrea shall fear nothing: Heaven protects him.

Filippa. Heaven, in its equal dispensation, gives
 The pious palms, the prudent length of days.
 We seek him not then with the same intent
 Of warning?

Sancia. With the same of warning; you,
 Where the good angels guard; I, where the bad
 Seduce him. Having reign'd, and having heard
 That thither tend his wishes . . .

Filippa. Momentary.

Sancia. But lawless wishes have returning wings
 Of speed more than angelic. I would win
 His private ear, lest courtiers take possession;
 I would persuade him, with his lovely bride
 To share all other troubles than the crown's.

SCENE IV. IN THE PALACE.

ANDREA and MARIA.

Andrea. Are we then going up to Capo-Monte?
 How long shall we remain there? all the night?

Maria. Until the evening.

Andrea. And where then?

Maria. Aversa.

Andrea. Ay, because there I askt her if she loved me:
 Beside . . . the strangest thing on earth . . . young brides
 Fly from the altar and roost anywhere
 Rather than near it. What should frighten them?
 But, if we go, why not set off directly?

Maria. We stay because the people round the gates,
 Who left too late their farms and villages
 To see our queen and you, expect at noon
 To follow the procession.

Andrea. What procession?
 Is there another marriage? O rare sport!

Maria (*continuing*). From Castel-Nuovo far as Capo-Monte.

Andrea. O glorious! But we really shall be let
Into the gardens and the groves?

Maria. Why not?

Who should prevent us?

Andrea. Into all? Among

The marble men and women who stand there,
And only stir by moonlight? I don't think
They stir at all: I am half-sure they don't.

Maria. I have been always of the same opinion.

Andrea (*shakes his head*). Although he said it who says mass,
I doubt it.

Maria. Ah! but to doubt is not to be half-sure:
The worse end may stick fast, like broken tooth.

Andrea. Now if you laugh, you make an unbeliever.
You girls are . . .

Maria. Pray what are we?

Andrea. Cunning.

Fra Rupert told me he would break their bones.

Maria. Did he?

Andrea. As bad. He'd tumble them down headlong,
If ever he once caught me looking up
Again at those who stood alert for swimming.

Maria. When?

Andrea. Four years back. To me they seem'd pure marble,
But Frate Rupert never could have spited
Mere marble so, although they lookt like women.
I scarcely would believe him when he said
They once were devils, but could do no harm
Now the salt water had been sprinkled on 'em,
Unless we look at them as worshippers.

Maria. I am sure you did not.

Andrea. No; upon my faith!

Maria. We never stand about them; we walk on.

Andrea (*in a low voice*). What! when you are but one or two
together?

I like their looks: the women are quite lovely,
And the men too (for devils) not amiss.
I wonder where they laid their plaguy scourges;
They must have had them, or were never worshipt.

Maria. Did not the Frate tell you?

Andrea. Ask the Frate!

He would have found them in a trice, and held
The scourges good enough, though not the devils.

Maria. I think you mind him less than formerly.

Andrea. I am a married man.

Maria. But married men
Fear priests and friars more than single ones.

Andrea. He is the holiest monk upon God's earth,
And hates you women most.

Maria. Then the least holy.

Andrea. Dost think it? If I thought him so, I'd fear
The beast no longer, broad as are his shoulders,
His breath . . . pho! . . . like a water-snake's, his fist
Heavy as those big books in chapter-houses,
And hairy as the comet; for they say
'Twas hairy; though I saw no hairs upon it.

Maria. Whenever love comes upon *thee*, *Andrea*,
Art thou not kinder?

Andrea. Kinder, but not holier.

Maria. Is not thy heart more grateful?

Andrea. As may happen;
A little thing would make it so.

Maria. And, tell me,
Art thou not readier to give alms?

Andrea. Tell *me*
How long, *Maria*, those bright eyes have seen
Into my thoughts? Fra Rupert knows not half one
Unless he question for an hour or better
And stamp and threaten, nor then more than half one.
I'll never fear him now: I'll tell him so.

Maria. Be not too hasty: tell him no such thing.
But fear him not: fear rather those about him.

[*FRA RUPERT is prying.*]

Andrea. Whom?

Maria. His Hungarians.

Andrea. They're my countrymen.

Maria. Should they make all us dread them?

Andrea. Me?

Maria. Even you,
Under Fra Rupert, like the best, or worst.
Should they possess our kingdom?

Andrea. My wife's kingdom?

No, by the Saints! they shall not touch her kingdom.

Fra Rupert (*crossing the farther part of the stage*). They shall
not touch her kingdom . . . and shalt thou?

Andrea. I heard a voice.

Maria (*laughing*). No doubt, no doubt, the Frate's.

Andrea. I hear and feel him farther off than thou dost.

Maria. *Andrea!* were thy ears as quick to hear
Thy friends as enemies!

Andrea. Still would that eye

Glare over me, like the great open one
Above the throne at church, of gold and azure,
With neither brows nor lashes, but black clouds
Round it, and nought beside.

Maria. The three eyes match,
May-be; but is there anything in church
So like his voice?

Andrea. The organ bellows are,
Without the keys. That was not much unlike it . . .
A little softer . . . and not too soft, neither.

Maria. I heard no voice whatever, not a sound.
Are you still half afraid?

Andrea. No, if thou are not.

Maria. Are you convinced?

Andrea. I was not very soon.

Men weigh things longer than you women do.
Maria! take my word, I am quite sated
Of fearing, tho' (thank God!) the worst is past.

Maria. I praise this manliness, this resolution.

Andrea. Dost thou? Already am I grown more manly,
More resolute. O! had your praise come earlier,
And heartily as now, another man
In thought and action might have been *Andrea!*
But will you tell *Giovanna* what you think?

Maria. I will indeed, and joyfully.

Andrea. Her praise

Is better still: yours screws the spur on heel,
Hers scarfs the neck and lifts the lance to hand.
What's all this tinkling?

[Guitars in the next chamber; the door opens.]

Maria (smiling). O! again *Fra Rupert!*
One of these voices surely must be his!
Which of them? can not you distinguish it?

Andrea (calls out). Who sings there?

Maria. Do not stop them: let us hear.

Petronilla.

Ah! do not go! ah do not go
Among the silly and the idle!
A lover surely should not so
From her who loves him slip and sidle.

Garisendo.

The *saltarella** waits for me,
And I must go and I must play . . .
Come! do not dance, but hear and see,
To-morrow we will love all day.

* The favourite Neapolitan dance.

Andrea. Now she is reasonable, he might spare her
A handful of his ribbons, or that net
Silver and blue there dangling down his nape.
Who is he? I don't know him.

Maria. Garisendo.

Andrea. And t'other?

Maria. Petronilla.

Andrea. Nor her neither.

Maria. I and Giovanna know here every face.

Andrea. And every name?

Maria. Every one.

Andrea. Clever creatures!

Maria. By all those twitchings at the two guitars,
And tappings of fore-finger on the wrist,
They seem to be at fault.

Andrea. No harm, no matter,
Zooks! they are up again; he first . . . that's odd.

Maria. Nay, but he only tells her what to sing.

Petronilla.

There is a lad upon the sea,
There is, O Mary! such a lad!
And all he thinks of, it is me.

Garisendo.

Why then, my jewel! he is mad.

Petronilla.

Mad! he is no more mad than you.

Garisendo.

Unless he stamps, and stares, and cries,
As certain pretty creatures do,
And stain their cheeks and spoil their eyes.

Petronilla.

I love, I love him with my whole . . .

[Sobbing.

Garisendo.

Go on, go on: you mean to say
(I'd lay a wager) heart and soul,
And very well, no doubt, you may.

Petronilla.

No, I may not, you cruel man!
He never did what you have done,
Yet, say and do the worst you can,
I love, I love, but you alone.

Maria. He has not much offended.

Andrea. Who can tell?

I am quite sorry they have fallen out.

What almanack can calculate fine weather
In those strange fickle regions where God plants
A man and woman, and sticks love between !

Maria. All the man's fault.

Andrea. All hers : she went and teased him :
With my own eyes I saw it ; so might you.

Maria. You do not always look so melancholy
At music ; yet what music can be gayer
Than this is ?

Andrea. Gayer, say you ? Ay, the music.
But if folks quarrel so in joke, what will they
In earnest ? If, before they're man and wife . .
Ah ! Heaven be praised ! there's time to break it off.
Look, look at them !

Maria. She seems more reconciled.

Andrea. Reconciled ! I should say . .

Maria. Pray, don't say anything.

Andrea. Ready for . . By my troth ! 'twas a salute.

Maria. Now what things run into your head, Andrea !

Andrea. It was as like as pea to pea, if not . .
However, let them know, another time
They must not sing about the house in that way.

Maria. Why not ?

Andrea. Giovanna might not like it now.

Maria. So ! you would do then all she likes ?

Andrea. I would :

But if she ever hears that wicked song,
She might not do all *I* like. Sweet Maria !
Persuade them, when you see them, to forget it ;
And, when you go to bed, turn on your pillow,
First drop it from one ear, then from the other,
And never pick it up again, God love you !

Maria. I'll run to them directly with your wishes.

Andrea. Stay : the last verse is clever : pick out that.

Maria. And nothing more ?

Andrea (anxiously). Don't overload your memory.

SCENE V. FRA RUPERT'S CELL.

ANDREA and FRA RUPERT.

Fra Rupert. What ! am I never to be left alone,
Andrea ? Let me have my pleasures too,
Such as they are.

Andrea. They're very much like mine.
Have we not prayed and scourged and wept together ?

Fra Rupert. Ah ! were that now the case !

Andrea. Well, father, well !
I would not stand between you and your duty :
But I thought, being prince . .

Fra Rupert (sneering). Thou, being prince,
Thoughtest ! Thou verily not only toppest
Thyself, but most among thy fellows, lad !
And so, Andrea ! being prince, thou thoughtest ?

Andrea. Good-bye, thou art as brave and blithe as ever.
[*Goes, but turns back.*]

I had one little thing upon my conscience.

Fra Rupert. I am quite ready : let me know the whole :
Since yesterday ? Nod ? wink ? to me ?

Andrea (to himself). He chafes me.

Fra Rupert. And throw thy head back thus ?

Andrea. My head's my own.

Fra Rupert. Wonderful ! be not over-sure of that. [*Aside.*]
If thou art contrite, go !

Andrea. I will not go ;

I am not contrite.

Fra Rupert. I am in a maze !

Andrea. A scrape thou'rt in.

Fra Rupert. A scrape ! Who could betray me ? [*To himself.*]

Andrea. Thou'st lost thy lamb, old shepherd ! no great
pet.

Fra Rupert. No, nor great loss : when lambs, tho', lose their
shepherd

They find the shambles nearer than the fold.

Andrea. Father ! you said you must confer with me
Another time ?

Fra Rupert. I did so.

Andrea. Why not now ?

Fra Rupert. I see not why : but soon Caraccioli,
And first Caraffa, must unbosom here.

Thou hast much power, Andrea ! thou canst do
Anything now to glorify thy country.

Andrea. Suppose I wish to swim to Ischia ; could I ?

Fra Rupert. My boy ! thou hast not wind enough for that.
Am I to be evaded, taunted, posed ?

Or thinkest thou, Andrea, that because
A silly girl espouses thee . .

Andrea. By Peter !

She who espouses me shall ne'er be call'd
A silly girl. I am a husband, Frate !

I am a boy no longer : I can cope
With women : and shall men then, even tho' friars,
Pretend to more ? I will go back and call

The maidens : they shall pelt you from the palace
If ever you set foot within its walls.

Fra Rupert. Should every stone from maiden hit my nose,
A grain of dust would hurt it tenfold more.

Andrea. Know, they have tongues that yours could never meet.

Fra Rupert. Andrea ! wouldst thou kill me with unkindness ?

Andrea. Gad ! he sheds tears ! . . Now at him !

. . Yes, I would.

Fra Rupert. And bring down these grey hairs . .

Andrea. Which hairs are they ?

The skull's are shaven, and the beard's are dirty ;

They may be grey though.

Fra Rupert. Shame upon thy mirth !

I am a poor old man.

Andrea. 'Tis your vocation.

Beside, I have heard say that poverty

Is the best bargain for the best place yonder

In Paradise. All prick their feet before

They clamber upward into that inclosure :

'Tis well worth while.

Fra Rupert. Age too (alas how heavy !)

To serve my loving ward, my prince's son,

I would support still longer, willingly.

Andrea. Frate ! 'tis more than I can say for it.

[RUPERT *creeps supplicatingly toward him.*

Out of my sight ! crawl back again . . I loathe thee.

SCENE VI.

Fra Rupert (alone). I have no malice in me : if I know
My secret heart, no heart so pure of malice :

But all my cares and vigils, hopes and dreams,

Blown by a boy, spurn'd by a brute, away !

So ends it ? Blessed Stephen ! not so ends it.

It ends with him, and with him only : me

No sword can touch. Why are not come those fools ?

I thought the other would have kept them off.

I will have power without him, and not thro' him.

They must have clean forgotten. 'Tis the hour . .

'Tis past it . . no, not past it . . just the hour ;

The bell now strikes for noon.

[*A knocking.*

One comes at last.

[*Opens the door : CARAFFA enters.*

Fra Rupert. Exactly to the moment.

Caraffa. I was walking

About the cloister till I heard the bell,

For Father Rupert's hours are golden ones.

Fra Rupert. May my friends spend them profitably for me!
Caraffa! thine are number'd.

Caraffa. All men's are.

Fra Rupert. But some are not notch'd off like schoolboy's days
Anxious to see his parent. Thou may'st see
Thy parent too.

Caraffa. I left him but just now.

Fra Rupert. We all have one, one whom we all have left
Too often. Hast thou not some sins for me?

Caraffa. As many as a man could wish to have.

Fra Rupert. Are there none dangerous? none involving life?
Hast thou forgotten our last conference?

Caraffa. No, nor shall ever. But what danger there?

Fra Rupert. Need I to say, Francesco, that no breath
Transpired from me? We both were overheard.

Caraffa. I think you hinted it.

Fra Rupert. I fear'd it only.

Thou knowest my fond love . . . I will not say
For thee . . . thou art but second in my breast . . .
Poor, poor Andrea!

Caraffa. Never fear about him.

Giovanna, even tho' she did not love,
(O that she did not!) yet would never wrong him.

Fra Rupert. Nay, God forbid she should! 'Twas not for me
To mark her looks, her blushes, gestures . . . how
Falter'd the word "Caraffa" as she spoke it.
Thy father then said nothing?

Caraffa. Not a word;

What should he?

Fra Rupert. Not a word. Old men are close:
And yet I doubted . . . I am apt to doubt . . .
Whether he might not . . . for ambition stirs
Most fathers . . . just let slip . . . Why didst thou falter?
For never falter'd child as thou didst falter.
Thou knowest then her mind better than we?

Caraffa. I know it? I divine it? Would I did!

Fra Rupert. Nay, rather let the bubble float along
Than break it: the rich colours are outside.
Everything in this world is but a bubble,
The world itself one mighty bubble, we
Mortals, small bubbles round it!

Caraffa. Frate! Frate!

Thou art a soapy one! No catching thee! [*Aside.*
[*Aloud.*] What hopes thou showest me! If these were solid
As thou, most glorious bubble who reflect'st them,
Then, then indeed, to me from this time forth
The world, and all within the world, were bubbles.

Fra Rupert. A knight art thou, Caraffa ! and no title
 (Secular title, mind ! secular title)
 Save only royalty, surpasses knighthood.
 There is no condescension in a queen
 Placing her foot within the palm of knight,
 And springing from it on her jewel'd saddle :
 No condescension is there if she lend
 To theirs the sceptre who lent hers the sword.
 Knights there have been, and are, where kings are not,
 Kings without knights what are they ?

Caraffa Norman blood
 Runs in my veins as in her own : no king
 (Savage or tame) shall stand above those knights
 Who raised his better to the throne he won :
 Of such am I. But what am I before
 Giovanna ! to adore, to worship her,
 Is glory far above the chiselling
 Of uncouth kings, or dashing them to earth :
 O be it mine !

Fra Rupert. Perhaps some other Norman
 May bear less tamely the new yoke ; perhaps
 A Filangieri may, this very night . . .

Caraffa. No Filangieri ever stooped to treachery.
 No sword of Norman ever struck by night.
 Credulous monk ! to me name Filangieri !
 Quellers of France and England as we are,
 And jealous of precedency, no name
 (Offence to none) is higher than Filangieri.

Fra Rupert. Boaster !

Caraffa. I boast of others ; few do that
 Who merit such a title.

Fra Rupert. Lower thy crest ;
 Pause ! thou art in my hands.

Caraffa. I am in God's.

Fra Rupert (mildly, after hesitation). Who knows but God
 hath chosen thee, amid
 His ministers of wrath, to save thy country
 And push oppression from her ! Dreams and signs
 Miraculous have haunted me.

Caraffa. Thee, Frate !

Fra Rupert. Me, even me. My ministry is over :
 Marriage ends pupilage, and royalty
 Ends friendship. Little is it short of treason
 To say that kings have friends.

Caraffa. How short of treason
 I know not, but I know how wide of truth.

Fra Rupert. Listen! There are designs against the life
Of young Andrea.

Caraffa. By the saints above!
I hope there are not.

Fra Rupert. If thy name be found
Among conspirators (and those are call'd
Conspirators who vindicate their country)
Where thy sword is, there must thy safety be.
The night for vengeance is the marriage-night.

Caraffa. I draw the sword without defiance first?
I draw the sword uninjured? Whom against?
Against a life so young! so innocent
Of any guile! a bridegroom! in his bed!
O! is this horror only at the crime?
Or is it . . . No, by heaven! 'tis heaven's own horror
At such unmanly deed. *I, Frate! I,*
Caraffa, stain with tears Giovanna's cheek!
I sprinkle poison on the flowers she smells!

Fra Rupert (resolutely). Hark ye, *Caraffa!* If the public
good . . .

Caraffa. Away with public good! Was never book
Put in my hand? was never story told me?
Show me one villain vile beyond the rest,
Did not that villain talk of public good?

Fra Rupert. Only at friars are *Caraffa's* stabs.
Valiant and proud and wealthy as thou art,
Thou may'st have nothing left on earth to-morrow.

Caraffa. I shall have more to-morrow than to-day.
My honour may shoot up all in one night,
As did some tree we read of.

Fra Rupert. Thou art rash.

Caraffa. Rashness may mellow into courage; time
Is left me.

Fra Rupert. For thy prayers.

Caraffa. My prayer then is,
Peace, safety, glory, joy, to our Giovanna!

Fra Rupert. Thou may'st depart.

Caraffa (indignantly). For ever.

[*Goes.*

Fra Rupert. He says well.

CARACCIOLI enters.

Fra Rupert (smiling and embracing him). Caraccioli! without
our friend *Caraffa!*

Caraccioli. He should have been here first.

Fra Rupert (aside). Perfectly safe!
I did not follow him into the cloister.

Caraccioli. Father! you seem as pondering to yourself
How that wild fellow kept his word so ill;
Caraffa-like!

Fra Rupert. I keep mine well with him.

Caraccioli. He should have thought of that.

Fra Rupert. He had no time.

Caraccioli. Always so kind! so ready with your plea
For little imperfections! Our Francesco,
Somewhat hot-headed, is warm-hearted too.

Fra Rupert. His petty jealousy about the queen
(Were there no sin behind it) we might smile at.
Caraffa stands not with *Caraccioli*.

Caraccioli. On the same level . . . there particularly.

Fra Rupert. Ho! ho! you laugh and jeer about each other?

Caraccioli. We might. How she would laugh at two such
ninnies!

Fra Rupert. At one, most certainly. But laughing girls
Often like grave men best. There's something grand
As well as grave even in the sound "Caraccioli."

Caraccioli. I have no hopes.

Fra Rupert. How I rejoice to hear it!
Hopes are but wishes, wishes are but sin,
And, fed with ranker exhalations, poison.

Caraccioli. The subtlest consumes me.

Fra Rupert. What?

Caraccioli. Despair.

Fra Rupert. Violets and primroses lie under thorns
Often as asps and adders; and we find
The unexpected often as the expected,
The pleasant as the hideous.

Caraccioli. That may be,
But what avails your lesson? whither tends it?

Fra Rupert. My son! I hear from those who know the world
And sweep its noisome litter to my cell,
There are mild days when love calls love abroad
As birds call birds, and even leaves call leaves:
Moments there are, my poor *Caraccioli*!
Moments in which the labyrinth of the ear
At every turn of its proclivity
Grows warmer, and holds out the clue, itself:
Severity should not beget despair.
I would not much encourage thee, nor yet
Dash all thy hopes, however inconsiderate,
For hopes there may be, though there should not be,
Flickering even upon despondency.
There may be sounds in certain names to smite

The stagnant heart, and swell its billows high
 Over wide spaces, over distant years . .
 There may ; but who would utter them and know it ?
 Delicate is the female sense, yet strong
 In cherishing and resenting ; very prompt
 At hiding both, and hating the discoverer.
 Never, my Paolo ! look too deeply in,
 Or thou may'st find what thou art looking for.
 Not that she ever said one word against thee ;
 She even lower'd her voice in naming thee,
 Seeing her sister and the rest sit giggling,
 " Anything else ! anything else ! " said she,
 And snapt the thread she workt with, out of spite.
 A friend, who hopes the best, may tell the worst.
 Patience will weary ; even Giovanna's patience.
 I could go farther, and relate . . but why
 Why ('tis too light to touch upon) relate
 The little hurt she gave Filippa's ancle
 With that lark heel of hers, by twitching it
 Uneasily ? O the impatient sex !
 She did shed . . tears I will not say . . a tear . .
 Shed it ! no ; I am wrong : it came, it stayed,
 As hangs one star, the first and only one,
 Twinkling, upon some vernal evening.

Caraccioli. I am but clay beneath her feet. Alas !
 Clay there would quicken into primal man,
 Glorified and immortal once again.

Fra Rupert. Thou art too hot, my Paolo ! One pulse less
 In the half-hour might have been rather better.
 Lovest thou our Francesco ?

Caraccioli. Like a brother.

Fra Rupert. He should not then have brought thy life in peril.
 Andrea is quite furious : all at court
 Are sworn upon thy ruin.

Caraccioli. Upon mine ?
 I will then calmly tell them they are wrong.

Fra Rupert. Will they as calmly hear ? Francesco said,
 Imprudent youth ! you boasted of remembering
 Every the lightest mole about Giovanna.

Caraccioli. I say it ?

Fra Rupert. Those were not your words ?

Caraccioli. My words !

Fra Rupert. Certainly not . . precisely.

Caraccioli. Holy Mary !

Is there in Naples, Hungary, or Hell,
 The monster who dares utter them ?

Fra Rupert. 'Tis hard
Our friend should be the very man.
Caraccioli. 'Tis false,
Frate! 'tis false: my friend is not the man. [Bursts away.
Fra Rupert (*sneering*). I will not follow *him* into the cloister.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. IN THE GARDEN OF CAPO DI MONTE.

BOCCACCIO *and* FIAMMETTA.*Boccaccio* (*sings*).

If there be love on earth, 'tis here,
O maid of royal line!
Should they who spring from heroes, fear?
Be scornful the divine?

Shine not the stars upon the sea,
Upon the fountain too?
O! let your eyes then light on me,
And O! let mine see you.

[FIAMMETTA comes forward.]

How kind to come!

Fiammetta. To come into the air?

I like it. They are all at their *merenda*.*
The smell of melon overpowers me quite;
I could not bear it; therefore I just come
Into the air to be revived a little.

And you too here? Sly as the satyr-head [Affecting surprise.
Under yon seat!

Boccaccio. Did you not tell me?*Fiammetta.* I?

You dreamt it.

Boccaccio. Let me dream then on? Without
Such dreams, *Fiammetta*, dull would be the sleep
Call'd life.

Fiammetta (*looking round timidly*). I must be broad awake.*Boccaccio.* You must.

Fiammetta (*nodding*). And you. All are indulgent to me;
most

Of all queen *Sancia* and *Giovanna*.*Boccaccio.* One

A saint, the other better.

Fiammetta. Then the grave.*Filippa* . .*Boccaccio.* Grave and watchful.* *Merenda* (*meridiana*) the mid-day repast.

Fiammetta. Not a word
Against her! I do hold her in my heart,
Although she gives me good advice sometimes.

Boccaccio. I'm glad to hear it; for the very worthy
Are very rarely general favourites.

Fiammetta. Some love our friend most cordially; those know
her:

Others there are who hate her; those would know her
And can not: for she stands aloof and thanks them:
Remoter, idler, neither love nor hate,
Nor care about her; and the worst and truest
They say of her, is, that her speech is dark.

Boccaccio. Doubtless, the vulgar eye will take offence
If cedar chambers are unwasht with lime.

Fiammetta. But why are you come here?

Boccaccio. To gaze, to sigh,
And, O *Fiammetta!* tell me if . . . to live.

Fiammetta (laughing). I never saw more signs of life in any.

Boccaccio. Cruel!

Fiammetta. To find the signs of life in you?

Boccaccio. To scoff them out.

Fiammetta. I am incapable.

[*BOCCACCIO rises, and steps back gazing fondly.*

O now, *Giovanni!* I am terrified!

Why! you sprang up . . . as if you sprang to kiss me!

Did ever creature think of such a thing?

Boccaccio. The drooping blades of grass beneath your feet

Think of it; the cold runlet thinks of it;

The pure sky (how it smiles upon us!) thinks of it . . .

I will no more then think of it.

[*Kisses her.*

Fiammetta. *Giovanni!*

Ah! I shall call you (wretch!) to task for this.

Boccaccio. Call; and, by heaven! I'll come, tho' from the
grave.

Fiammetta. Any one now would say you thought me handsome.

Boccaccio. Earth has two beauties; her *Bellagio*

And *Anacapri*; earth's inhabitants

Have only one among them.

Fiammetta. Whom?

Boccaccio. *Fiammetta.*

Fiammetta. Where are you running now? Stay! tho' quite
angry,

I am not yet so angry as I should be:

But, if you ever take such liberties

Again!

Boccaccio. O never! . . . till we reach *Aversa.*

Fiammetta. And will you there? and tell me to my face?

Wait, wait for pardon. Must we part? so soon?
So long a time?
[*Is departing.*]

Boccaccio. Till star-light.

Fiammetta. Stay a moment.

Boccaccio. Gladly a life: but my old mule loves walking
And meditation. Now the mask and dress,
And boy to carry them, must all be found.

Fiammetta. Boy, mask, dress, mule! speed, gallop, to
Aversa!

Boccaccio. So many kisses lie upon this hand,
Mine hardly reach it.

Fiammetta. Lips there may have been;
Had there been kisses, I must sure have felt them,
As I did yours . . . at least I thought I did . . .
But go, for I am half afraid of you . . .
That is, of your arriving yonder late.
Go, else the crowd may stop you; and perhaps
I might delay you for some sudden fancy,
Or . . . go your ways . . . not let you go at all.

SCENE II. FRA RUPERT'S CELL.

FRA RUPERT *alone.*

I wisht him power; for what was his was mine;
I wisht him jealousy, distrust, aversion
For his pert bride, that she might have no share.
I never fail'd before this wretched day.
Fail'd! I have not: I will possess my rights,
Spring over him, and never more be spurn'd.
They who had rais'd his seat shall stablish mine,
Without those two vain boys: O! had they done it!
And not been where they are! The fault was theirs.

MAXIMIN *enters.*

Fra Rupert. Maximin! since thy services may soon
Be call'd for, satchel on thee my experience,
Then set about thy work. My Maximin!
Mind how thou liest! Know, if lie thou must,
Lies, while they sap their way and hold their tongues,
Are safe enough: when breath gets into them,
They, and the work about them, may explode.
Maximin! there are more lies done than said.
Son! when we hesitate about the right,
We're sure to do the wrong.

Maximin. I don't much hesitate.

Fra Rupert. To chain a dog and to unchain a dog
Is hazardous alike, while the deaf beast
Stands barking: he must sleep; then for the cord.

Maximin. What! are my services in some farm-yard?
I am a soldier.

Fra Rupert. All great statesmen have been.
How large a portion of the world is each
In his own eyes.

Maximin. Am I so proud in saying
I am a soldier?

Fra Rupert. I am proud of thee:
Be that sufficient. Give thou every man
What he requires of thee.

Maximin. A world to each?

Fra Rupert. Not so: yet hold not up to him a glass
That shows him less, or but some digits greater.

Maximin. Honestly now, Fra Rupert, by my cross!
No gull art thou. I knew that trick myself,
And (short the digits) told it word for word.

Fra Rupert. I will be sworn for thee. Being minister.
(Not that I think it certain just at present,
For when the sage and honest are most wanted,
That is the chink of time they all drop through)
But when thou art so, mind this precept. One
Not wise enough to keep the wiser off
Should never be a minister of state.

Maximin. Fra Rupert! presto! make me one to-day.
Give fifty precepts, there they go [*Blowing*] but this,
I'll kiss the cross and the queen's hand, and keep.

Fra Rupert. I make thee minister!

Maximin. You can make kings.

Fra Rupert. Not even those! I might have made Andrea
What thou and every true Hungarian
Wisht him to be, ere he show'd hoof for claw,
And thought to trample down his countrymen.

Maximin. Andrea bloody-minded! turtle-doves
Are bloody-minded then, and leave their elm,
The first day's mating, for the scent of gore.

Fra Rupert. Maximin! here is no guitar for thee,
Else mightest thou sip that pure poetry
Preciously warm and frothy from the udder.

Maximin. Father! if any in our troop call'd me
A poet, he should sing for it.

Fra Rupert. Thou'rt brave,
Maximin! and Andrea is not bloody.
But there are princes, or have been within

Our memory, who, when blood gusht forth like water
From their own people, stood upon some bridge
Or island, waving their plumed caps, and drank
The cries of dying men with drunken ears.

Maximin. Curses, eternal curses, man's and God's,
Upon such heathens!

Fra Rupert. Nay, they were not heathens;
Happily they were christians, Maximin!
Andrea, though myself instructed him,
Is treacherous. Better were this pasty people
Dissolved, washt down, than brave Hungarians perish.

Maximin. No truer word prophet or saint e'er spoke.

Fra Rupert (sighing). Saint hath not spoken it: O may not
prophet!

Maximin. I, being neither, can not understand you.

Fra Rupert. The innocent, the helpless, are surrounded.

Maximin. Andrea?

Fra Rupert. My Andrea would betray us.

Maximin. To whom? Are we the helpless? we the innocent?

Fra Rupert. While he is yonder at Aversa, we
Are yelling thro' these very streets for mercy.

Maximin. I cry *you* mercy, father! When I yell,
I'll borrow whistles from some thirty good
Neapolitans, who'll never want them more.

Fra Rupert. Be ready then! be ready for Aversa!
Glory stands there before thee; seize the traitor,
Win wealth, win jewels, win . . . What have not palaces
For brave young men upon such nights as these?

Maximin. Would'st bid me stick Andrea?

Fra Rupert. Hungary,
Not I; our country, not revenge.

Maximin. Bids murder?

I will proclaim thy treason thro' the camp.

Fra Rupert. Unhappy son, forbear! By thy sweet mother!
Upon my knees! Upon my knees before
A mortal man! Yea, Rupert! bend thy head;
Thy own son's hand should, and shall, spill thy blood.

[MAXIMIN starts, then hesitates, then rushes at him.

Maximin. Impudent hound! I'll have thy throat for that.

Fra Rupert (guards his throat). Parricide! make me not cry
murder . . . love

Forbids it . . . rather die! My son! my son!
Hide but thy mother's shame; my shame, not hers.

[MAXIMIN relaxes his grasp.

Maximin! stand between the world and it?

Oh! what avails it! sinner as I am!

Other worlds witness it.

[MAXIMIN *looses hold.*

My Maximin?

[RUPERT *embraces him.*

Maximin. Why, how now, Frate! hath some wine-vault burst
And fuddled thee? we know thou never drinkest.

Fra Rupert. That lighter sin won't save me.

Maximin. If light sins
Could save us, I have many a bushelful,
And little need your sentry-boxes yonder.

Fra Rupert (very mildly). I must reprove (my own dear
child!) (*Passionately*) . . . I must
Reprove, however gently, such irreverence.

Conessionals *are* sentry-boxes! true!
And woe betide the sentry that naps there!

Woe, if he spare his voice, his prayer, his curse!

Maximin. Curses we get dog-cheap; the others, reasonable.

Fra Rupert. Sweet Maximin! whatever my delight
In gazing on those features (for sharp shame,
When love blows over it from lands afar,
Tingles with somewhat too, too like delight!)
We must now part. Thy fortune lies within
My hands. To-night, if thy own officers
Command thee to perform a painful office . . .

Maximin. Good father! what know we of offices?
Let them command a duty, and 'tis done.

Fra Rupert. Discreet tho'! Maximin! discreet! my marrow!
Let not a word escape thee, not a breath.
Blessings, my tender kid! We must walk on
(I love thee so!) together thro' the cloister.

Maximin. No, father! no; too much!

Fra Rupert. Too much for thee?

[RUPERT *precedes, speaks to three men, who bow and retire; he
disappears.*

Maximin (loitering in the cloister). Incredible! yet friars and
cockroaches
Creep thro' all rooms, and like the closet best.
Let me consider! can it be? how can it?
He is bare fifty; I am forty-one.

SCENE III. THE GARDEN OF FRIAR ANSELM'S CONVENT.

FRA RUPERT, KLAPWRATH, ZINGA, and PSEIN.

Fra Rupert. Ye brave supporters of Hungarian power
And dignity! O Zinga! Klapwrath! Psein!
Becomes it me to praise (we may admire
Those whom to praise were a temerity)
Such men as you.

Psein. Us? we are only captains.

Zinga. After hard service we are nothing more.

Klapwrath. Twenty-three years hath Klapwrath rid and thirsted.

Fra Rupert. Ingratitude! the worst of human crimes,
Hardly we dare to say; so flat and stale,
So heavy with sick sobs from mouth to mouth,
The ejaculation. To my mind scarce witchery
Comes up to it.

Psein. Hold! father! For that sin
Either we deal with devils or old women.

Fra Rupert. Man was created of the dust; to make
The fragile mass cohesive, were employed
The bitter waters of ingratitude.

[*Affects to weep.*

Klapwrath. Weeping will never rinse that beaker, Frate!

Fra Rupert. It is not for myself.

Zinga. We see it is not.

Fra Rupert. Ye can not see deep into me.

Psein. Few can.

Fra Rupert. Ye can not see the havoc made within
By ever-dear Andrea.

Zinga. Havoc?

Fra Rupert. Havoc!

Klapwrath. I like the word; purses and rings hang round it,
Necklaces, brooches, and indented armllets.

Psein. But, ere we reach 'em, ugly things enough,
Beside the broken swords that lie below
And brave men brandisht in the morning light.

Klapwrath. Brave men then should not cross us; wise men
don't.

Fra Rupert. Your spirit all attest; but those the least
Whose safety hangs upon your saddle-skirts.
Men are not valued for their worth in Italy:
Of the same price the apple and the peach,
The service and the fig.

Zinga. Well, there they beat us.

Psein. Whatever they may be, we can not help it.

Fra Rupert. Help it, I say, ye can; and ye shall help it,
Altho' I perish for ye.

Klapwrath. Then indeed,
Frate! some good might come of it; but wilt thou?

Fra Rupert. Abandon to his fate my poor Andrea!
Has he not slept upon this bosom?

Klapwrath. Has he?

He must have had some scratches on his face.

Fra Rupert. Has he not eaten from this hand?

Klaporath. Why then,
He'll never die for want of appetite.

Fra Rupert. Have we not drunk our water from one bowl?
Klaporath. Father! you were not very liberal;
He might have drunk the whole of mine, and welcome.

Fra Rupert. How light ye make of life!

Zinga. Faith! not so light;
I think it worth a tug, for my part of it;
Nor would I leave our quarters willingly.

Pecin. O the delight of floating in a bath,
One hand athwart an orange-bough, the other
Flat on the marble pavement, and our eyes
Wandering among those figures round the arch
That scatter flowers, and laugh at us, and vie
With one another which shall tempt us most!
Nor is it undelightful, in my mind,
To let the curly wave of the warm sea
Climb over me, and languishingly chide
My stopping it, and push me gently away.

Klaporath. Water, cold, tepid, hot, is one to me.
The only enemy to honest wine
Is water; plague upon it!

Zinga. So say I.

Fra Rupert. Three braver friends ne'er met. Hei! hei!
hei! hei!

The very name of friend! You can not know
What love I bear Andrea!

Pecin. All the world
Knows it.

Frate. The mischief he designs, who guesses?

Pecin. All boys are mischievous.

Fra Rupert. Alas! but mischief
There might be without treachery.

Pecin. Poor Andrea!
So little fit for it!

Fra Rupert. Frank generous souls
Always are first to suffer from it, last
To know it when they meet it.

Klaporath. Who shall harm
Our own king's colt? Who moves, speaks, looks, against him,
Why! that man's shroud is woven, and spread out.

Fra Rupert. Let mine then be! would it had been so ere
I saw this day!

Pecin. What has he done?

Fra Rupert. To me
All kindness ever. Why such mad resolves

Against the lives of his most sure defenders ?
 Against his countrymen, his guards, his father's
 Most chosen friends ?

Zinga. Against your life ?

Fra Rupert. No, no !

Heaven protects *me* ; he sees it ; nor indeed

(To do him justice) has he such a heart.

But why ask *me* to aid him ? Why ask *me*

Whether he was as strong at heart as *Zinga*,

Dexterous at sword as *Klapwrath*, such a fool . . .

Pardon ! your pardon, gentlemen ! [Looking at PSEIN.]

Psein. As *Psein*.

Fra Rupert. The very word ! Who else dared utter it ?

I give him up ! I almost give him up !

Klapwrath. He shall not rule us. The best blood of
 Hungary

Shall not be pour'd this night upon the wine.

Fra Rupert. If you must leave the country . . . and perhaps

No worse may reach the greater part of you . . .

Psein. I have no mind to leave it.

Zinga. None shall drive us.

Klapwrath. The wines of Hungary strive hard with these,

Yet *Klapwrath* is contented ; he hates change.

Zinga. Let us drink these out first, and then try those.

Fra Rupert. Never will come the day when pine-root fire

And heavy cones puff fragrance round the room,

And two bluff healthy children drag along

(One by the ear, the other by the scut)

A bulging hare for supper ; where each greyhound

Knows his own master, leaps up, hangs a foot

Inward, and whimpers piteously to see

Flagons go round, then off for bread and lard.

Those were your happy times ; unless when foray

Stirr'd ye to wrath, and beeves and swine and trulls

(Tempting ye from propriety) heapt up

A mount of sins to strive against ; abduction

Of linen-chests, and those who wove the linen ;

And shocking oaths obscene, and well-nigh acts ;

Fracture of cellar-doors, and spinning-wheels ;

And (who can answer for you) worse, worse, worse !

Klapwrath. 'Sblood ! Frate ! runs no vine-juice in our
 arteries ?

Psein's forehead starts wry veins upon each side ;

His nostrils blow so hot they'll crack my boots.

Zinga. Must we move hence ?

Fra Rupert. To die like sheep ? like conies ?

Ye shall not die alone ; I will die with you.
There have been kings who sacrificed their sons.
Abraham would have done it ; Pagans have ;
But guardians such as I am ! . .

Klapwrath. Frate ! Frate !

Don't tear those tindery rags, or they will quit thee
With only horse-hair under, and some stiffer.

Fra Rupert. You conquer me, you conquer me, I yield.
He was not bloody. Could it end with one !
And we knew which . . or two, or three.

Zinga. But us ?

Fra Rupert. " If once the captains of the companies,"
Said he . . and then, I own, he said no more :
He saw me shudder, and he sped away.

Klapwrath. Are we to hold our throats out to the knife ?

Fra Rupert. Patience ! dear doubtful Klapwrath ! mere
suspicion !

He did not say the knife, or sword, or halter,
He might have meant the scaffold ; nothing worse ;
Deprive you he might not of all distinction,
Nay, might spare one or other of you yet :
Why then prevent what may need no prevention ?
Slyer are few ; many more sanguinary :
Must we (don't say it) give him up ? I hope
He's mischievous through weakness, not malignity.

Zinga. What matters that ? A feather-bed may stifle us
(If we will let it) with a babe to press it.
Is there no other prince in Hungary
Fit to maintain us here ?

Fra Rupert. The very thought
That came into my head !

Pecin. But when ours fall,
What matters it who leaps upon his horse
To overlook our maintenance ? A fool
I may be ; can his wisdom answer that ?

Zinga. He doubts my courage, bringing thus his own
Against it. He's a boy : were he a man,
No injury, no insult, no affront . .
Every man is as brave as I . . Stop there !
By all my saints ! (*He shows several about him*) by all my services !
This hilt shall smash his teeth who dares say, 'braver.'

Klapwrath. What I am you know best, at battling it ;
Nothing is easier : but I've swum two nights
And days together upon Baian wine,
And so have ye : 'twould swamp that leaky nump-skull.
Behead us ; good ! but underrate us ; never !

Fra Rupert. Having thus clear'd our consciences, and shown
Our purity in face of day, we swear . . . [*Hesitates*

Zinga. Frate, if you don't grudge an oath or two . . .

Fra Rupert. Death to Andrea! loyalty to Lewis!

All. Hurrah!

Fra Rupert. Sweet friends! profane not thus the cloister!
Leave me to weep for him! the cruel boy!

SCENE IV. PALACE OF AVERSA; SALOON OVERLOOKING THE GARDEN.

SANCIA, FILIPPA, MARIA, FIAMMETTA.

Maria. Ha! here they come again. See! lady Sancia
Leaning upon Filippa. They are grown
Wiser, and will not barter songs for griefs.

Boraccio sings.

A mellow light on Latmos fell;
It came not from the lowly cell,
It glided from the skies;
It lighted upon one who slept,
Some voice then askt him why he wept,
Some soft thing prest his eyes.

Another might have wondered much,
Or peer'd, or started at the touch,
But he was far too wise;
He knew the light was from above,
He play'd the shifting game of love,
And lost at last three sighs.

Fiammetta (to FILIPPA). I wish he would come nearer, just
to see
How my hair shines, powder'd with dust of gold:
I think he then would call me . . .

Maria. What?

Fiammetta. Fiammetta.

Filippa. He hardly . . . poet as he seems to be . . .
Such as he is . . . could feign a better name.
He does not seem to be cut out for singing.

Fiammetta. I would not have his voice one tittle altered.
The poetry is pretty . . . She says nothing.
The poetry is charming . . . Now she hears me.
The most delightful poetry! . . . O lady
Filippa! not one praise for it! not one!
I never dreamt you were yourself a poet.

Filippa. These summer apples may be palatable,
But will not last for winter; the austere
And wrinkle-rinded have a better chance.

Throw a whole honeycomb into a haystack,
It may draw flies, but never will feed horses.
From these same cogs (eternally one tune)
The mill has floured us with such dust all over
As we must shake off, or die apoplectic.
Your gentle silken-vested swains may wish
All poetry one sheepfold.

Maria. Sheep are well,
Like men and most things, in their proper places,
But when some prancing knight would entertain us,
Some gallant, brightening every gem about him,
I would not have upon the palace-steps
A hind cry out, "Make way there for my sheep."
They say (not speaking of this woolly race)
They say that poets make us live for ever.

Filippa. Sometimes the life they lend is worse than none,
Shorn of its glory, shrivel'd up for want
Of the fresh air of virtue.

Fiammetta. Yet, to live!
O! and to live by those we love so well!

Filippa. If such irregularities continue
After to-night, when freedoms are allowed,
We must lock up the gardens, rigorously
Forbidding all the inmates of the palace
To use the keys they have.

Fiammetta. The good king Robert
Sooner had driven out the nightingales
Than the poor timid poets.

Filippa. Timid poets!
What breed are they of?

Fiammetta. Such as sing of love.

Filippa. The very worst of all; the boldest men!

Maria. Nay; not the boldest; very quarrelsome,
Tragic and comic, hot and cold, are so;
And so are nightingales; the gardener
Has told me; and the poets do no worse
Than they do. Here and there they pluck a feather
From one another, here and there a crumb;
But, for hard fighting, fair straight-forward fighting,
With this one nosegay I could beat them all.
In good king Robert's day were lute and lyre;
Now hardly dare we hang them on the nail,
But run away and throw them down before
The boisterous drum and trumpet hoarse with rage.
Let poetry and music, dear Filippa,
Gush forth unfrozen and unchecked!

Filippa. Ah child!
Thy fancy too some poet hath inflamed :
Believe me, they are dangerous men.

Maria. No men
Are dangerous.

Filippa. O my child !

Maria. The very creatures
Whom God has given us for our protection.

Filippa. But against whom ?

Maria. I never thought of that.

Fiammetta. Somebody told me once that good king Robert
Gave keys to three or four, who neither were
Nor would be constant inmates of the court.

Maria. Who might and would not ! This is an enigma.
They must have felt then very low indeed.
Among our glass-house jewels newly set,
I have seen vile ones, and have laught to think
How nicely would my slipper pat their faces ;
They never felt thus low.

Sancia. We feel it for them.
Prescriptively, we leave to our assayers
To stamp the currency of gold and brass.

Fiammetta (to FILIPPA). Have you not prais'd the king your
very self
For saying to Petrarca, as he did,
" Letters are dearer to me than my crown,
And, were I forced to throw up one or other,
Away should go the diadem, by Jove ! "

Sancia. Thou art thy very father. Kiss me, child !
His father said it, and thy father would.
When shall such kings adorn the throne again !

Fiammetta. When the same love of what Heaven made most
lovely
Enters their hearts ; when genius shines above them,
And not beneath their feet. [Goes up to GIOVANNI.

Sancia (to FILIPPA). Rapturous girl !
Warmth ripens years and wisdom. She discourses
Idly as other girls on other things.

Filippa. That ripening warmth fear I.

Sancia. Portending what ?

Filippa. Ah, gracious lady ! sweetest fruits fall soonest. .

Sancia. (Who sweeter ?)

Filippa. And are bruised the most by falling.

Maria (joining them). Sicily and myself are disagreed.
Surely the man who sang must have thick fingers.

He play'd so badly : but his voice is sweet,
For all its trembling.

Fiammetta. Now I think the trembling
Makes it no worse. I wish he would go on.

Maria. Evidently the song should finish there.

Fiammetta. Evidently it should go on . . . (*aside*) for ever.

Maria. Ho! ho! you are not cruel to the knight?

Fiammetta. It is no knight at all.

Sancia. How know you that?

Maria. You would be frightened . . .

Fiammetta. He could never frighten.

Maria. If tilting . . .

Fiammetta. Nobody would hurt Giovanni.

SCENE V.

ANDREA, MARIA, and FIAMMETTA.

Andrea. So! you too have been listening, every soul,
I warrant ye.

Maria. And have you too, Andrea?

Andrea. From that snug little watch-tower: 'twas too high;
I only lookt upon the tops of trees.

See! him there! maskt! under the mulberry!

Fiammetta. I do not see him . . . Look for him elsewhere:
That is a shadow.

Andrea. Think you so? It may be.
And the guitar?

Fiammetta. What! that great yellow toad-stool?

Andrea. How like is everything we see by starlight!

Fiammetta (*aside*). If there were not a star in all the sky,
Every one upon earth would know Giovanni!

Andrea. I wish the mulberries were not past, that dozens
Might drop upon him, and might speckle over
His doublet: we should see it like a trout
To-morrow, white and crimson, and discover
The singer of this nonsense about light.

Fiammetta. If you don't like it, pray don't listen to it.

Maria (*maliciously*). Then let us come away.

Fiammetta. Pray do.

Maria (*taking her arm*). Come.

Fiammetta (*peevishly*). No.

Maria. Listen! another song!

Fiammetta. Hush! for Heaven's sake!

O! will you never listen? All this noise!

Maria. Laughter might make some; smiles are much too
silent.

Fiammetta. Well; you have stopt him; are you now content?

Maria. Quite, quite; if you are.

Fiammetta. He begins again!

Hush! for the hope of Paradise! O hush!

Boccaccio sings.

List! list ye to another tale!

Fiammetta.

No; he who dares tell one
To other ears than one's shall fail.

Boccaccio.

I sing for her alone.

Andrea. I have a mind to be . . .

Maria. What? prince!

Andrea. What? angry.

Maria. Not you.

Andrea. Not I? Why, who should hinder me?

Maria (coaxing). No, no; you won't be angry, prince!

Andrea. I said

Half-angry, and resolve to keep my word.

Maria. Anger is better, as pomegranates are,
Split into halves, and losing no small part.

Andrea. I never heard such truth about pomegranates!

What was the other thing we reason'd on?

Ho! now I recollect, as you shall see.

[*Goes: all follow.*

SCENE VI. GARDEN.

ANDREA, MARIA, FIAMMETTA, and BOCCACCIO.

Andrea. Keep back: where thieves may be, leave men alone.

Now for drawn swords! Where are they; slipt behind

The mulberry: wisely schemed! 'twon't do! come forth!

Yield! tremble like a poplar-leaf! Who art thou?

[*Seising* BOCCACCIO.

Boccaccio. King Robert, sir, respected me.

Andrea. Did he?

Did he? Then far more highly should Andrea.

Sicily! treat him kindly. We may all,

Even you and I, commit an indiscretion.

How the stars twinkle! how the light leaves titter!

And there are secret quiverings in the herbs,

As if they all knew something of the matter,

And wisht it undisturb'd. To-night no harm

Shall happen to the worst man in Aversa.

ACT V.

SCENE I. PALACE OF AVERSA.

ANDREA and GIOVANNA.

Giovanna. How gracefully thou sattet on thy horse,
Andrea!

Andrea. Did I?

Giovanna. He curveted so,
Sidled and pranced and croucht and plunged again,
I almost was afraid, but dared not say it.

Andrea. Castagno is a sad curvetting rogue.

Giovanna. 'Twas not Castagno; 'twas Polluce.

Andrea. Was it?

How canst thou tell, Giovanna?

Giovanna. I can tell.

Andrea. All at hap-hazard: I am very sure
'Twas not the horse you lookt at; nor did I
Think about riding, or about the palfrey,
Crimson and gold, half palfrey and half ostrich.
But thou too ridest like a queen, my dove!

Giovanna. So very like one? Would you make me proud?

Andrea. God forbid that! I love thee more for beauty.
Ne'er put on pride, my heart! thou dost not want it;
Many there are who do; cast it to them
Who can not do without it, empty souls!

Ha! how you look! is it surprise or pleasure?

Giovanna. Pleasure, my love! I will obey with pleasure
This your first order. But indeed, my husband,
You must not look so fondly when the masks come,
For you and I, you know, shall not be masked.

Andrea. A pretty reason for not looking fond!
Must people then wear masks for that?

Giovanna. Most do.

I never saw such fondness as some masks
Presented.

Andrea. Thou hast never seen half mine;
Thou shalt; and then shalt thou sit judge between us.
We have not spoken more to-day, my chuck,
Than many other days, yet thou appearest
Wiser than ever. I have gain'd from thee
More than I gave.

Giovanna. And, without flattery,
I am more pleas'd with your discourse than ever.

Andrea (fondly). No, not than ever. In this very room

Didst thou not give to me this very hand
Because I talked so well?

Giovanna. We foolish girls
Are always caught so.

Andrea. Always kept so, too?

Well, we must see about it then, in earnest.

Giovanna. Andrea! one thing see to: pray inquire
If, in the crowd that rushed so thro' the gates,
No accident has happen'd. Some cried out,
Some quarrell'd; many horses started off,
And bore amid them.

Andrea. Never fear.

Giovanna. But ask.

[*He goes.*]

SCENE II.

FIAMMETTA, MARIA, FILIPPA, and SANCIA, *enter.*

Maria. The bridegroom is among the other grooms,
Asking odd questions: what man's horse broke loose,
Who was knockt down, what fruit-stall overturn'd,
Who quarrell'd, who cried out, struck, ran away.

Giovanna. Maria! this is pleasantry.

Andrea (returning hastily). They say,
Caraffa and Caraccioli are dead.

Giovanna. It can not be: they were both well this morning.

Filippa. The west-wind blew this morning . . . no air now.

Giovanna. O but, Filippa! they both came together.
Did not queen Sancia tell you?

Filippa. I have seen
Two barks together enter the port yonder,
And part together.

Giovanna. But to die at once!

Filippa. Happy the friends whom that one fate befalls!

Giovanna. So soon!

Filippa. Perhaps so soon.

Giovanna. It may be happy.

It must be strange; awfully strange indeed!

[*FIAMMETTA goes out.*]

Andrea. My darling! how you pity those two youths!
I like you for it.

Giovanna. Both have fathers living:
What must they suffer! Each . . . I never heard,
But may well fancy . . . loved some girl who loves him.
I could shed tears for her.

Maria. My dear Giovanna!
Do queens shed tears? and on the wedding-day?

Sancia. I see no reason why they should not.

Filippa (aside). I,
Alas! see far too many why they should.

Andrea. What did Filippa say? that brides should cry?

Filippa (to GIOVANNA and MARIA). Not idly has the genial
breath of song

Turn'd into pearls the tears that women shed;
They are what they are call'd: some may be brighter
Among your gems, none purer, none become
The youthful and the beautiful so well.

Andrea (as FIAMMETTA enters). Here enters one you never
will teach that,

She is too light for grief, too gay for love,
And neither salt nor mistletoe can catch her,
Nor springe nor net: she laughs at all of them
Like any woodpecker, and wings away.
I know you women; I'm a married man:

Fiammetta. They will not give the story up: they draw
All different ways, but death they all will have.

Andrea. Ay, and one only will not satisfy them.

[*An Officer enters, and confers apart with him.*]

Certain?

Giovanna. Some other accident less heavy,
Heaven! let us hope!

Andrea. Strangled! O what a death!
One of them . . . one (no matter now which of them)
Disliked me, shunn'd me; if we met, lookt at me
Straighter and taller and athwart the shoulder,
And dug his knuckles deep into his thigh.
I gave him no offence . . . yet, he is gone . . .
Without a word of hearing, he is gone!
To think of this! to think how he has fallen
Amid his pranks and joyances, amid
His wild heath myrtle-blossoms, one might say,
It quite unmans me.

Sancia. Speak not so, my son!
Let others, when their nature has been changed
To such unwonted state, when they are call'd
To do what angels do and brutes do not,
Sob at their shame, and say they are unmann'd:
Unmann'd they can not be; they are not men.
At glorious deeds, at sufferings well endured,
Yea, at life's thread snapt with its gloss upon it,
Be it man's pride and privilege to weep.

SCENE III. GRAND SALOON.

Masks passing.

ANDREA, GIOVANNA, MARIA, FIAMMETTA, FILIPPA.

Filippa. It may be right, my lady, that you know
What masks are here.

Giovanna. I have found out already
A few of them. Several waived ceremony
(Desirably at masks) and past unnoticed.
The room fills rapidly.

Filippa. Not to detain
My queen (for hundreds anxiously approach),
Pardon! I recognised the Prince Luigi.

Giovanna. Taranto? Tell our cousin to keep on
His mask all evening. Hither! uninvited!

Maria (out of breath). Think you the dais will keep the
masks from hearing?

Giovanna. Why should it?

Maria. Oh! why should it? He is here.
Even Filippa could distinguish him.
Every one upon earth must know Taranto.

Giovanna. Descend we then: beside the statue there
We may converse some moments privately.

Maria. Radiant I saw him as the sun . . . a name
We always gave him . . . rapid as his beams.
I should have known him by his neck alone
Among ten thousand. While I gazed upon it,
He gazed at three mysterious masks: then rose
That graceful column, ampler, and more wreathed
With its marmoreal thews and dimmer veins.
The three masks hurried thro' the hall; Taranto
After them (fierce disdain upon his brow)
Darted as Mercury at Jove's command.
No doubt, three traitors who dared never face him
In his own country, are courageous here.

Giovanna. Taranto then, Taranto was unmaskt
Against my orders!

Maria. Rather say, *before*.
Luigi never disobeyed Giovanna.

Giovanna. Filippa carried them.

Maria. I know his answer.

Giovanna. Repeat it then, for she may not to-night.

Maria. "Tell her I come the cousin, not the prince,
Nor with pretension, nor design, nor hope;
I come the loyal, not the fond, Taranto."
Why look you round?

Giovanna. The voice is surely his.

Maria. The thoughts are . . .

Giovanna (*pressing her hand*). May, O Heaven! the speaker
be! [*Both walk away.*]

Fra Rupert (*masked and disguised, to one next*). I heard our
gracious queen, espoused to-day,
Give orders that Taranto keep well maskt.

Next Mask (*to another*). Ho then! Taranto here!

Second Mask. What treachery!

Fra Rupert (*masked*). He could not keep away. Tem-
pestuous love

Has tost him hither. Let him but abstain
From violence, nor play the jealous husband,
As some men do when husbands cross their road.

Second Mask. Taranto is a swordsman to the proof.

First Mask. Where is he?

Fra Rupert. He stood yonder, in sky-blue,
With pearls about the sleeves.

Second Mask. Well call him Phœbus!

I would give something for a glimpse at what
That mask conceals.

Fra Rupert. Oh! could we catch a glimpse
Of what all masks conceal, 'twould break our hearts.

Far better hidden from us! Woman! woman! [*Goes off.*]

First Mask (*to second*). A friar Rupert! only that his voice
Breathes flute-like whisperings, rather than reproofs.

Second Mask. Beside, he stands three inches higher; his girth
Slenderer by much.

First Mask. Who thought 'twas really he?

I only meant he talkt as morally.

Third Mask (*coming up to Fourth*). I am quite certain there is
Frate Rupert.

Fourth Mask. Where is he not? The Devil's ubiquity!
But, like the Devil, not well known when met.

How found you him so readily? What mark?

Third Mask. Stout is he, nor ill-built, tho' the left shoulder
Is half a finger's breadth above the right.

Fourth Mask. But that man's . . . let me look . . . That man's
right shoulder

Stands two good inches highest.

Third Mask. Doubt is past . . .

We catch him! over-sedulous disguise!

SCENE IV.

Andrea. We have a cousin in the house, my queen!
What dost thou blush at? why art troubled? sure

We are quite grand enough for him : our supper
(I trust) will answer all his expectations.

Maria. So you have lookt then at the supper-table?

Andrea. 'Twould mortify me if Giovanna's guests
Were disappointed.

Giovanna. Mine! and not yours too?

Andrea. Ah sly one! you have sent then for Taranto
And would not tell me! Cousin to us both,
To both he should be welcome as to one.
Another little blush! Why, thou art mine,
And never shalt, if love's worth love, repent it.

Giovanna. Never, my own Andrea! for such trust
Is far more precious than the wealthiest realms,
Or all that ever did adorn or win them.

Andrea. I must not wait to hear its value told,
We shall have time to count it out together.

I now must go to greet our cousin yonder,
He waits me in the balcony; the guards
Have sent away the loiterers that stood round,
And only two or three of his own friends
Remain with him. To tarry were uncourteous.

Maria (earnestly). I do believe Luigi is below.

Andrea. Do not detain me: we have never met
Since your proud sister spoke unkindly to him,
And, vaulting on his horse, he hurried home. [Goes.

Maria. The soldiers there do well to guard the balcony,
And close the folding-doors against intrusion. [Cry is heard.

Fiammetta. Ha! some inquisitive young chamber-lady,
Who watcht Luigi enter, pays for it.
Those frolicsome young princes are demanding
A fine for trespass.

Giovanna. Nay, they are too rude,
Permitting any rudeness. Struggles! sobs!
Andrea never caused them.

Maria. Shame, Taranto!

Giovanna. Stifing of screams! Those nearer are alarmed;
Those farther off are running for the staircase;
And many come this way! What can they mean?
See, they look angry as they run, and dash
Their hands against their foreheads! [Very alarmed.
Where's a page?

[A page stands masked in the doorway; crowds
of unmasked behind him.

Maria. A page! a page!

Page (to himself). I am one; and discovered! [Advances.

Giovanna. Run; see what those young courtiers round the
princes

Are doing in the balcony. Below ;
Not there.

Page. I might mistake the Prince Andrea,
Not having ever seen him.

Maria. Who then are you ?

Page. The Prince Luigi's page, whom I awaited,
To say his groom and horse are near at hand.

Maria. He goes then ?

Page. Ere it dawn.

Giovanna. O! hasten! hasten
Below, and instantly run back again,
Reporting me what you can discover there.

Page (returns). Lady! the lamps about the balcony
Are all extinguishd.

Giovanna. Is the wind so high ?

What didst thou hear, what didst thou note, beside ?

Page (hesitating). Against the gentlest, the most virtuous
queen,

Opprobrious speech, threats, imprecations . .

Giovanna. Pass it.

Page. Upon the stairs; none from the gardens.

Giovanna. There

What sawest thou ?

Page. Over the balcony

Downward some burden swang.

Giovanna. Some festive wreath

Perhaps.

Page. Too heavy; almost motionless.

Maria. Several damask draperies thrown across.

Page. May-be. The wind just stirr'd the bottom of them :
I had no time to look : I saw my prince
Fighting.

Maria. O heaven! was ever night like this . .

Page. For gallant sword! it left two proofs behind :
The third man, seeing me (poor help for arm
So valiant!) fled.

Maria. O! we are safe then, all. [*Very joyous.*]

Page. No cap lost they, nor did the one who fled :

Whose in the world of Naples, can be this ?

[*He takes from under his richly embroidered cloak the
cap of ANDREA. GIOVANNA clasps it to her face,
and falls with a stifled scream.*]

[*Another Page brings in ANDREA's ermine cloak.*]

This cloak fell near me from the balusters.

Maria. His own! Ha! this dark speck is not the ermine's.

Filippa. See! she revives! Hide it away! O guests
Of our unhappy festival, retire.

GIOVANNA OF NAPLES.

CHARACTERS.

LEWIS, *King of Hungary.* LUIGI, *Prince of Taranto.* ACCIAJOLI, *Seneschal of Naples.* UGO DEL BALZO, *Spinello, General of Naples.* RIENZI, *Tribune of Rome.* FRA RUPERT. BOCCACCIO. PETRARCA. PERIN, *a Hungarian Captain.* POPE'S NUNCIO. PRIOR OF THE CELESTINES. WIFE OF RIENZI. FILIPPA OF CATANIA. SANCIA, *her Granddaughter.* PRINCESS MARIA. FIAMMETTA.

ACT I.

SCENE I. GARDEN OF CAPO-DI-MONTE.

BOCCACCIO *and* FIAMMETTA.

Boccaccio. Adieu the starlit gardens of Aversa,
The groves of Capo-Monte!

Fiammetta. Why adieu?

Boccaccio. One night will throw its gloom upon them long.

Fiammetta. It will indeed, but love can dwell in gloom,
And not repine in it.

Boccaccio. The generous man,
Who might have much impeded ours, gave way
To bitter impulses. My face is flusht
To think of his hard doom, and find myself
Happy where he was happy, and so lately!

Fiammetta. I too have sighs, nor for thee only, now.
Giovanna, had an angel told it me
The other day, I should have disbelieved.
We all are now alike. Even queen Sancia,
Whose sadness is scarce sadness, so resign'd
Is she to Heaven, at this balustrade
Lean'd and lookt over, hearing some one sing.
"Impatient is the singer there," said she,
"To run thro' his delight, to fill the conch
Of song up to the brim, and wise were he
Thought he not, O my child, as think he might,
How every gust of music, every air,
Breathing its freshness over youthful breasts,
Is a faint prelude to the choirs above,
And how Death stands in the dark space between,
To some with invitations free and meek,
To some with flames athwart an angry brow;

To others holds green palm and aureole crown,
 Dreadless as is the shadow of a leaf . . ."
 But, while she said it, prest my hand and wept,
 Then prayed of Heaven its peace for poor Andrea.

Boccaccio. We may think too as wisely as the queen
 When we attain her age; of other flames
 And other palms and other crowns just now.
 Like every growth, thoughts also have their seasons;
 We will not pluck unripe ones; they might hurt us.
 That lady then was with you?

Fiammetta. She herself
 Led me up hither by the sleeve. Giovanna
 Is there below, secure, in Castel-Nuovo.
 Look you! what crowds are gathering round about it.

Boccaccio. I see them, and implore you, my Fiammetta,
 To tarry here, protected by queen Sancia.

Fiammetta. And will you tarry near me?

Boccaccio. While the queen
 Your sister is quite safe.

Fiammetta. What! thinkest thou
 She ever can be otherwise than safe?
 I will run down to her.

Boccaccio. There is no danger
 At present; if there should be, my weak aid
 Shall not be wanting. He whom she laments
 I too lament: this bond unites me with her;
 And I will keep her in my sight, and follow
 (As lighter birds follow the powerfuller)
 Where'er the tempest drives her . . . not to save,
 But break the fall, or warn her from below.

Fiammetta. Generously spoken, my own sweet Giovanna!

Do so, and I can spare you; but remember
 Others may want a warning too, may want
 Some one to break a fall, some one to save . . .
 Giovanna! O Giovanna! to save what?

For what is left but love? . . . save that, Giovanna!

Boccaccio. Were any infelicity near you,
 Crowns and their realms might perish: but your sister
 Is part of you: had she but lookt into
 Your cradle, and no more; had one kind word,
 And only one, fallen from her upon you;
 My life should be the price for it.

Fiammetta. Your life!
 We have but one, we two. But until she
 Is safe again, and happier, you shall keep it. . .
 Go, go then; follow her; but soon return.

While you are absent from me, shapeless fears
Must throng upon and keep awake my sorrow.

Boccaccio. To grieve for what is past, is idle grief,
Idler to grieve for what may never be.
Courage! when both most wish it, we shall meet.

SCENE II. CASTEL-NUOVO.

GIOVANNA *and* DEL BALZO.

Giovanna. Ugo del Balzo! thou art just and firm.
Seek we the murderers out, and bring them forth
Before their God and fellow-men, if God
Or fellow-men have they. Spare none who did
This cruel deed. The partner of my throne,
Companion of my days . . . until that day . . .
Avenge! In striking low the guilty head
Show mercy to my people. Take from me
And execute with promptness this commission.
O what a chasm in life hath one day made,
Thus giving way with such astounding crash
Under my feet, when all seem'd equable,
All hopeful, not a form of fear in sight.

Del Balzo. Lady! if all could see the pangs within
Which rend your bosom, every voice would pause
From railing and reproach.

Giovanna. Reproach who will,
Rail who delight in railing. Could my arm
Protect the innocent?

Del Balzo. But strange reports
(With this commission in my hand I speak it)
Murmur throughout the city. Kindred, ay,
Close kindred are accused.

Giovanna. Such accusations
Have burst upon my ear: they wrong my cousin.
A man more loyal than the brave Taranto
Nor court nor field e'er saw: but even he
Shall not escape if treachery be found
Within the shadow of that lofty mien.

Del Balzo. No, by the sword of the archangel! no . . .
Altho' his sister smiles this hour upon
Her first-born of my dear and only brother
The Duke of Andria. Thou must weep, Francesco!
And she, and I; for such dishonour taints
The whole house through, obscuring past and future.
Was he not in Aversa?

Giovanna. He was there.

Del Balzo. And were no orders given that he keep on
His mask all evening?

Giovanna. Yes, I gave those orders.

Del Balzo. The Queen's commission reaches not the Queen.

Giovanna. Imperfect then is that commission, Ugo!

Del Balzo. Freedom of speech is limited.

Giovanna. By what?

Del Balzo. The throne.

Giovanna. For once then push the throne more back,
And let thy words and actions have their scope.

Del Balzo. Why was Aversa chosen for the revels?

[*The QUEEN hesitates and sighs deeply.*

One answer comes from all. Because the town
Is Norman, the inhabitants are Norman,
Sworn enemies to an Hungarian prince;
The very name sounds hostilely; the walls
Built in aversion to the pride of Capua.

Giovanna. I could give other answer, which such hearts
Would little understand. My happiest days
Were spent there . . . O that there my last had closed!
Was it not in Aversa we first met?

There my Andrea, while our friends stood round
At our betrothment, fain would show me first
A horse they led for him from Hungary.
The hands we join'd were little hands indeed!
And the two rings we interchanged would ill
Let pass the bossy chain of his light hair
Entwisted with my darker, nor without
His teeth was then drawn through it. Those were days
When none saw quarrels on his side or mine,
Yet were there worse than there were latterly,
Or than since childhood ever. We have lived
From those days forth without distrust and strife.
All might have seen but now will not know that.

Del Balzo. Lady! the court and people do remember
That none more courteous, none more beautiful,
Lives than the Prince Luigi . . . they acknowledge
That Prince Andrea's qualities fell short . . .

Giovanna. Del Balzo! cease! he was your prince but now . . .
His virtues were domestic . . . few saw those.

Del Balzo. Few, I confess it; not so few the other's.
His assiduities, his love.

Giovanna. Do these
Remember too, whate'er advantages
The Prince Luigi of Taranto had,
I gave my hand where they who rear'd me will'd,

That no contention in our family
Might reach my people? Ugo! tell me now
To whom show'd I my love? To them or him?

Del Balzo. Lady! 'twas nobly done. Yet he was seen
To walk among the maskers on that night,
Was ordered to keep on his mask, was known
To watch Andrea in the balcony,
To rush away, to fight below the place
Where the inhuman deed was perpetrated,
And then to fly.

Giovanna. O! if Taranto could
Be guilty! . . . but impossible! My sister
Saw him pursue three masks: and his own page
Found him in fight with one, where two were slain.

Del Balzo. Would any court receive such testimony?

Giovanna. Examine then more closely. I am lost,
Not in conjectures, for my mind flies off
From all conjecture, but in vague, in wild
Tumultuous thoughts, all broken, crost, and crazed.
Go, lose no moment. There are other things [*DEL BALZO goes.*]
I could have said . . . what were they? . . . there are things . . .
Maria . . . why not here! . . . She knows there are . . .
O! were the guilty so perplexed as I am,
No guilt were undiscover'd in the world!

SCENE III.

FILIPPA, SANCIA TERLIZZI, DEL BALZO.

Sancia Terlizzi. Gentle and gracious and compassionate,
Companion and not queen to those about her,
Giovanna delegates her fullest powers
To stern Del Balzo; and already force
Enters the palace gates.

Filippa. Let them be closed
Against all force. Send for the seneschal.

Sancia Terlizzi. Acciajoli has departed for Aversa,
There to make inquest.

Filippa. Who dares strike the door?

Del Balzo (entering). The laws.

Filippa. Count Ugo! is the queen extinct?

Del Balzo. The prince is. Therefore lead with due respect
These ladies, and the rest, away. [*To an Officer.*]

Filippa. What means
This violence?

Del Balzo (to the Officer). Let none, I pray be used.

[*To FILIPPA.*]

Behold the queen's commission! In that chamber
Where close examinations must ensue,
In clear untroubled order let your words
Leave us no future violence to be fear'd.

Filippa (returning the paper). The queen hath acted as she
always acts,

Discreetly; bravely; it becomes her race
And station: what becomes a faithful subject
Let us do now.

[*The QUEEN enters.*

Sancia Terlissi. Turn: lo, the queen herself!

Del Balzo. Lady! there is one chamber in the realm,
And only one, and that but for one day,
You may not enter.

Giovanna. Which is that, Del Balzo?

Del Balzo. Where the judge sits against the criminal.

Giovanna. Criminal! none are here.

Del Balzo. If all my wishes

Ava!l'd me, there were none.

Giovanna. Sure, sure, the palace
Is sacred.

Del Balzo. Sacred deeds make every place
Sacred, unholy ones make all unholy.

Giovanna. But these are our best friends.

Filippa. My royal mistress!

The name of friendship and the name of justice
Should stand apart. Permit me to retire . . . [*To DEL BALZO.*
Whither, sir, you must dictate.

Del Balzo. Lead them on.

[*The QUEEN throws her arms round FILIPPA, who gently
removes them and goes.*

Lady! would you protect the culpable?

Giovanna. Ugo del Balzo! would you wrong the queen?

Del Balzo. I recognise the lofty race of Robert,
And my arm strengthens and my heart dilates.

Giovanna. Perform your duty, sir, and all your duty;
Win praise, win glory . . . mine can be but tears.

[*Goes.*

SCENE IV.

FRA RUPERT, DEL BALZO.

Fra Rupert. Confessionals are close; and closer still
The heart that holds one treasure.

Del Balzo. Father Rupert!

What brought thee hither at this busy hour?

Fra Rupert. My duty: I must not delay my duty.

Del Balzo. What is it ?

Fra Rupert. I would fain absolve from sin
(Far as the Church allows) the worst of sinners.

Del Balzo. In few plain words, who sent for thee ?

Fra Rupert. In fewer,
I scorn thy question.

Del Balzo. Father ! thou must wait.
The prince's death involves some powerful ones,
Whose guilt or innocence shall presently
Be ascertained.

Fra Rupert. What ! and shall man hear first
The guilty soul confess its secret sin ?
Shall not the angels carry up the tale
Before the people catch it ?

Del Balzo. They, no doubt,
Already have done this.

Fra Rupert. Not half, not half.

Del Balzo. Father ! it seems thou knowest more about it
Than I or any else. Why reddenest thou ?

Fra Rupert. Dost think, Del Balzo, any word escapes
The sanctuary of consciences ? the throne
Of grace and mercy on our earth below ?
The purifier, the confessional ?

So then ! some powerful ones are apprehended
For what they did ! O merciful Del Balzo !

Be sparing of a woman's blood, Del Balzo !

And age hath claims upon our pity too ;

And so hath youth, alas ! and early ties
Suddenly broken shock far round about.

Beside ; who knows . . thou canst not certainly . .

If any can . . they may be innocent,

Each of the three, one more, one less, perhaps :

Innocent should be all whose guilt lacks proof.

O my poor child Andrea, pardon me !

Thou wouldst not have sought blood for blood, Andrea !

Thou didst love all these women ! most of all

Her . . but there's justice, even on earth, Andrea !

[*Goes.*

Del Balzo. 'Tis so ! that stern proud bosom bursts with grief.

SCENE V.

Maria. Ah, why, Del Balzo, have you let come in
The filthy monk, Fra Rupert ? He has frightened
Sancia Terlizzi almost into fainting.
And tell me by what right hath he or any
Ordered her up into her room, and taken

Her mother down below, into those chambers
Which we have always been forbid to enter!

Del Balzo. Perhaps to ask some questions; for the queen
Ought to be satisfied.

Maria. Then let me go
And ask her: she would tell me in a moment
What they will never get from her.

Del Balzo. Perhaps,
O princess! you may have mistaken.

Maria. No:
I never was mistaken in Filippa.
Eudeness can neither move nor discompose her:
A word, a look, of kindness, instantly
Opens her heart and brings her cheek upon you.

Del Balzo. The countess has more glorious qualities
Than noble birth has given any else.
Whether her heart has all that tenderness . .

Maria. Is my heart tender.

Del Balzo. Be it not too tender,
Or it may suffer much, and speedily,
And undeservedly. The queen your sister,
Gentle as you, hath fortitude.

Maria. Giovanna
Is tenderer than I am; she sheds tears
Often than I do, though she hides them better.

Del Balzo. I saw their traces: but more royally
Never shone courage upon grief oppress.

Maria. The lovely platane in the garden-walk
Catches the sun upon her buds half-open,
And looks the brightest where unbarkt and unscathed.
O find them out who have afflicted her
With that most cruel blow.

Del Balzo. 'Tis what she bade me,
And what I now am hastening to perform.

[*Goes.*

GIOVANNA enters.

Maria. Courage, Giovanna! courage, my sweet sister!
Del Balzo will find out those wicked men.
O! I forgot to tell him what assistance
Fra Rupert might afford him. Every crime
Is known to him. But certainly Fra Rupert,
Who loved Andrea so, will never cease
Until he find the slayer of his friend.
Ah my poor sister! if you had but heard
The praises of Del Balzo, you would soon
Resume your courage and subdue your tears.

Giovanna. Before Del Balzo, sister, I disdain
To show them or to speak of them. Be mine
Hid from all eyes! God only knows their source,
Their truth or falsehood. In the light of day
Some lose their bitterness, run smoothly on,
And catch compassion, leisurely, serenely:
Never will mine run thus: my sorrows lie
In my own breast; my fame rests upon others,
Who throw it from them now the blast has nipt it.
'Tis ever so. Applauses win applauses,
Crowds gather about crowds, the solitary
Are shunned as lepers, and in haste past by.

Maria. But we will not be solitary; we
Are not so easy to pass by in haste;
We are not very leper-looking.

Giovanna. Cease,
Maria! nothing on this earth so wounds
The stricken bosom as such sportiveness,
Or weighs worn spirits down like levity.
Give me your hand. . . Reproof is not reproach.
I might have done the same. . . how recently!

Maria. Hark! what is all that outcry?

Giovanna. 'Tis for him
Whom we have lost.

Maria. But angry voices mixt
With sorrowful?

Giovanna. To him both due alike.

SPINELLO enters.

Spinello. Hungarian troops throng every street and lane,
Driving before them the infirm, the aged,
The children, of both sexes.

Giovanna. Shelter them.

Spinello. Such is the hope of those base enemies,
That, unprovided for defence, the castle
May fall into their hands: and very quickly
(Unless we drive them back) our scanty stores
Leave us exhausted.

Giovanna. Dost thou fear, Spinello?

Spinello. I do: but if my sovran bids me bare
This breast of armour and assail her foe,
Soon shall she see what fears there lie within.

Giovanna. Let me too have my fears, nor worse than thine,
Loyal and brave Spinello! Dare I ask
Of God my daily bread nor give it those

Whose daily prayers have earned it for us all ?
I dare not. Throw wide open every gate
And stand between the last of my poor people
And those who drive them in.

Spinello. We then are lost.

Giovanna. Not from God's sight, nor theirs who look to
God.

Maria. O sister ! may that smile of yours be parent
Of many. It sinks back, and dies upon
The lovely couch it rose from. [DEL BALZO enters.] I will go :
Del Balzo looks, I think, more stern than ever.

Giovanna. Del Balzo, I perceive thou knowest all,
And pitiest my condition. [DEL BALZO amazed.]

Spinello. Standest thou,
Lookest thou, thus, before thy sovran, sir ?

Giovanna. Be friends, be friends, and spare me one affront.
Wiser it were, and worthier, to devise
How tumults may be quell'd than how increast.
On your discretion lies your country's weal. [Goes.]

Spinello. Ugo del Balzo ! thou art strong in war,
Strong in alliances, in virtue strong,
But darest thou, before the queen, before
The lowest of the loyal, thus impute
With brow of scorn and figure fixt aslant,
Atrocious crimes to purity angelic ?

Del Balzo. Heard'st thou her words and askest thou this
question ?

Spinello ! nor in virtue nor in courage
(Our best alliances) have I pretence
To stand before thee. Chancellor thou art,
And, by the nature of thy office, shouldst
Have undertaken my most awful duty :
Why didst thou not ?

Spinello. Because the queen herself
Will'd otherwise ; because her chancellor,
She thought, might vindicate some near unduly.

Del Balzo. She thought so ? what ! of thee ?

Spinello. Thus it appears.
But on this subject never word escaped
Her lips to me : her own pure spirit frankly
Suggested it : her delicacy shunn'd
All explanation, lacking no excuse.
Thou askest if I heard her at thy entrance :
I heard her, like thyself. The words before
Thou didst not hear ; I did. Her last appeal
Was for the wretched driven within the castle,

And doom'd to pine or force us to surrender.
For them she call'd upon thee, never else,
To pity her condition.

Del Balzo. Pardon me!

I have much wrong'd her. Yet, among the questioned
Were strange confessions. One alone spake scornfully
Amid her tortures.

Spinello. Is the torture, then,
The tongue of Truth?

Del Balzo. For once, I fear, 'tis not.

Spinello. It was Giovanna's resolute design
To issue her first edict through the land
Abolishing this horrid artifice,
Whereby the harden'd only can escape.
"The cruel best bear cruelty," said she,
"And those who often have committed it
May once go through it."

Del Balzo. And would'st thou, Spinello!
Thus lay aside the just restraints of law,
Abolishing what wise and holy men
Raised for the safeguard of society?

Spinello. The holy and the wise have done such things
As the unwise and the unholy shrink at.

Del Balzo. It might be thought a hardship in a country
Where laws want ingenuity; where scales,
Bandage, and sword, alone betoken Justice.
Ill-furbisht ineffective armoury,
With nothing but cross-shooting shafts of words!

Spinello. Since every deed like torture must afflict
A youthful breast, so mild, so sensitive,
Trust it to me, and we will then devise
How the event may best be laid before her.

Del Balzo. A clue was given by unwilling hands,
Wherewith we entered the dark narrow chambers
Of this strange mystery. Filippa first,
Interrogated if she knew the murderer,
Denied it: then, if she suspected any;
"I do," was her reply. Whom? She was silent.
Where should suspicion now (tell me, Spinello!)
Wander or fix? I askt her if the Queen
Was privy to the deed. Then swell'd her scorn.
Again I askt her, and I show'd the rack.
"Throw me upon it; I will answer thence,"
Said with calm voice Filippa. She was rackt.
Screams from all round fill'd the whole vault. "See, children!
How those who fear their God and love their Prince

Can bear this childish cruelty," said she.
 Although no other voice escaped, the men
 Trembled, the women wail'd aloud. "To-morrow,"
 Said I, "Filippa! thou must answer Justice.
 Release her." Still the smile was on her face:
 She was releas'd: Death had come down and saved her.

Spinello. Faithfullest friend of the unhappy! plead
 For us whose duty was to plead for thee!

Thou art among the Blessed! On, Del Balzo!

Del Balzo. Sancia, her daughter's child . .

Spinello. The playful Sancia?

Whose fifteenth birthday we both kept together . .

Was it the sixth or seventh of last March? . .

Terlizzi's bride two months ago?

Del Balzo. The same.

Spinello. And the same fate?

Del Balzo. She never had seen Death:

She thought her cries could drive him off again,
 Thought her soft lips might have relax'd the rigid,
 And her warm tears . .

Spinello. Del Balzo! wert thou there?

Or tearest thou such dreamery from some book,
 If any book contain such?

Del Balzo. I was there;

And what I saw I ordered to be done.

Justice would have it; Justice smote my heart,
 Justice sustained it too.

Spinello. Her husband would

Rather have died than hear one shriek from Sancia.

Del Balzo. So all men would: for never form so lovely
 Lighted the air around it.

Spinello. Let us go
 And bear her home.

Del Balzo. To me the way lies open;

But much I fear, Spinello, the Hungarians
 Possess all avenue to thy escape.

Spinello. Escape is not the word for me, my friend.

I had forgotten the Hungarians
 (It seems) the Queen, myself, captivity . .

I may not hence: relate then if more horrors
 Succeeded.

Del Balzo. When Terlizzi saw Filippa

Lie stiff before him, and that gentle bride
 Chafing her limbs, and shrinking with loud yells
 Whenever her soft hand felt some swol'n sinew,
 In hopes to finish here and save all else,

He cried aloud, "Filippa was the murderess."
 At this she darted at him such a glance
 As the mad only dart, and fell down dead.
 "'Tis false! 'tis false!" cried he. "Speak, Sançia, speak!
 Or hear me say 'tis false." They dragg'd away
 The wavering youth, and fixt him. There he lies,
 With what result of such inconstancy
 I know not, but am going to inquire. . .
 If we detect the murderers, all these pains
 Are well inflicted.

Spinello. But if not?

Del Balso. The Laws
 Have done their duty and struck fear through all.

Spinello. Alas! that duty seems their only one.

Del Balso. Among the first 'tis surely. I must go
 And gather up fresh evidence. Farewell,
Spinello.

Spinello. May good angels guide your steps!
 Farewell! That Heaven should give the merciless
 So much of power, the merciful so little!

ACT II.

SCENE I. CASTEL-NUOVO.

GIOVANNA and MARIA.

Maria. I do not like these windows. Who can see
 What passes under? Never were contrived
 Cleverer ones for looking at the sky,
 Or hearing our Hungarians to advantage.
 I can not think their songs are pastorals;
 They may be; if they are, they are ill-set.
 Will nothing do, Giovanna? Raise your eyes;
 Embrace your sister.

Giovanna. So, you too, Maria!
 Have turgid eyes, and feign the face of joy.
 Never will joy be more with us . . . with you
 It may be . . . O God grant it! but me! me,
 Whom good men doubt, what pleasure can approach?

Maria. If good men all were young men, we might shudder
 At silly doubts, like other silly things
 Not quite so cold to shudder at.

Giovanna. Again,
 Maria! I am now quite changed; I am

Your sister as I was, but O remember
I am (how lately!) my Andrea's widow.

Maria. I wish our little Sancia would come hither
With her Terlizzi . . . those inseparables!
We scarcely could get twenty words from them
All the day long; we caught them after dinner,
And lost them suddenly as evening closed.

Giovanna. Send for her. But perhaps she is with Filippa. . .

Maria. Learning sedateness in the matron life.

Giovanna. Or may-be with the queen whose name she bears,
And who divides her love, not equally
With us, but almost equally.

Maria. If so,
No need to seek her; for the queen went forth
To San Lorenzo at the dawn of day,
And there upon the pavement she implores
Peace for the dead, protection for the living.

Giovanna. O may her prayers be heard!

Maria. If piety
Avails the living or the dead, they will.

Giovanna. How, how much calmer than thy sweetest smile
Has that thought made me! Evermore speak so,
And life will almost be as welcome to me
As death itself.

Maria. When sunshine glistens round,
And friends, as young as we are, sit beside us,
We smile at Death . . . one rather grim indeed
And whimsical, but not disposed to hurt us . . .
And give and take fresh courage. But, sweet sister!
The days are many when he is unwelcome,
And you will think so too another time.
'Tis chiefly in cold places, with old folks,
His features seem prodigiously amiss.
But Life looks always pleasant, sometimes more
And sometimes less so, but looks always pleasant,
And, when we cherish him, repays us well.
Sicily says it is the worst of sin
To cast aside what God hath given us,
And snatch at what he may hereafter give
In its due season . . . scourges, and such comfits,
Cupboarded for Old-age. Youth has her games;
We are invited, and should ill refuse.
On all these subjects our sweet Sicily
Discourses with the wisdom of a man.
You are not listening: what avails our wisdom?

Giovanna. To keep afloat that buoyant little bark

Which swells endanger. O may never storm
O'ertake it! never worm unseen eat thro'!

Maria. I wish we were away from these thick walls,
And these high windows, and these church-like ceilings,
Without a cherub to look down on us,
Or play a prank up there, with psalter-book,
Or bishop's head, or fiddle, or festoon.

Giovanna. Be satisfied awhile: the nobler rooms
Are less secure against the violence
Of those Hungarians.

Maria. I saw one who bowed
Graceful as an Italian. "Send away
The men below," said I, "then bow again,
And we will try which bows most gracefully."

Giovanna. My giddy, giddy sister!

Maria. May my head

Be ever so, if crowns must steady it!

Giovanna. He might have thought . .

Maria. Not he; he never thinks.

He bowed and shook his head. His name is Psein.
Often hath he been here on guard before:
You must remember him.

Giovanna. No, not by name.

Maria. Effeminate and vain we fancied him,
Because he always had a flower in hand,
Or with his fingers combed his forehead hair.

Giovanna. No little merit in that sullen race.

Maria. If he has merit I will bring it out.

Giovanna. Resign that idle notion. Power is lost
By showing it too freely. When I want
His services, I order them. We part.
Too large a portion of the hour already
Has been among the living. Now I go
To other duties for the residue
Of this sad day.

Maria. Unwelcome is Maria
Where sorrow is?

Giovanna. Her sorrow is unwelcome;
Let me subdue my own; then come and join me.
Thou knowest where the desolate find one
Who never leaves them desolate.

Maria. 'Tis hard
To linger here alone.

Officer. The Seneschal
Of Naples. Acciajoli.

[Goes.]

SCENE II.

ACCLAJOLI and MARIA.

Acciajoli. By command
Of our most gracious queen, O royal lady!
I come for yours.

Maria. That is, to bear me company.

Acciajoli. Such only as the humblest bear the highest.

Maria. Seneschal! you excell the best in phrases.

You might let others be before you there,
Content to shine in policy and war.

Acciajoli. I have been placed where others would have shone.

Maria. Come, do not beat me now in modesty.

Had I done anything, I might not boast,
Nor should I think I was improving it
By telling an untruth and looking down.
I do not like our lodgement, nor much wish
To see an arrow quivering in that wainscote:
The floors are well enough; I would not see them
Paved with smooth pebbles from Hungarian slings.
Can not you send those soldiers to their quarters?

Acciajoli. In vain have I attempted it.

Maria. Send Psein

To me.

Acciajoli. He, like the rest, is an insurgent.

Civilest of barbarians, yet may Psein
(With horror I must utter it) refuse.

Maria. Fear of refusal has lost many a prize.

[ACCLAJOLI goes.]

I hope the Seneschal will go himself,
Not send another. How I wish to ask it!
But, at my years, to hint an act of delicacy
Is too indelicate. He has seen courts,
Turn'd over their loose leaves (each more than half
Illumination, dulness the remainder),
And knows them from the cover to the core.

SCENE III.

PSEIN conducted by ACCLAJOLI, who retires.

The queen commands my presence here.

Maria. The queen

Desired your presence; I alone command it.
Eyes have seen *you*, commander Psein!

Psein. Impossible!

Maria. Yes, eyes have seen you, general Psein! they have, And seen that they can trust you.

Psein. By my troth
To all that's lovely!

Maria. Ah, sad man! swear not . .
Unless you swear my words.

Psein. To hear and swear
And treasure them within this breast, is one.

Maria (*Psein repeating*). "I swear to love and honour and obey" . .

Ha! not the hand . . it comes not quite so soon . .

Psein. I have but little practice in the form;
Pardon me, gracious lady!

Maria. Earn your pardon
By your obedience. Now repeat again.
"Whatever perils may obstruct her path,
I give safe-conduct to my royal mistress,
Giovanna, queen of Naples." (*He starts.*) Have you taken
Me for my sister all this while? I told you
It was not she commanded you, 'twas I.

Psein. Oaths are sad things! I trot to church so seldom
They would not let me out of mine for little
(Not they!) like any good old customer.

Maria. And so! you would deceive me, general?

Psein (*aside*). I am appointed! that sounds well: but general!
She said the same before: it must be true.

Maria. Tell me at once, nor hesitate. Another
May reap the harvest while you whet the sickle.

Psein. But I have sworn to let none pass, before
The will of my superiors be announced.

Maria. Behold them here! their shadow fills this palace,
And in my voice, sir, is their will announced.

Psein. I swore.

Maria. I heard you.

Psein. But before.

Maria. Before
Disloyalty, now loyalty. Are brave
And gallant men to ponder in the choice?

Psein. Devoted as I am to you, O lady!
It can not be.

Maria. Is that the phrase of Psein?
We love the marvellous; we love the man
Who shows how things which can not be can be.
Give me this glove again upon the water,
And queen Giovanna shall reward you for it.

Psein. Upon the water or upon the fire,

The whirlpool or volcano . . . By bad luck
 (What fools men are! they always make their own!)
 The troops are in revolt. Pride brightens zeal
 But not invention. How shall we contrive
 To manage them at present?

Maria. Tell the troops
 We will have no revolts. Sure, with your powers
 Of person and persuasion, not a man
 Would hesitate to execute his duty.

Psein. We are but three . . .

Maria. We are but two: yet, Psein!
 When two are resolute they are enough.
 Now I am resolute, and so are you,
 And if those soldiers dare to disobey
 It is rank mutiny and halbert-matter.
 Await the Seneschal: he now returns.

[*Goes.*

Psein. She knows the laws of war as well as I,
 And looks a young Minerva, tho' of Naples.

SCENE IV.

ACCIAJOLI and PSEIN.

Acciajoli. Sorrow and consternation are around.

Psein. Men could not have cried louder had they lost
 Policinello, who begets them fun,
 While princes but beget them blows and taxes.
 When will they see things straightly, and give these
 Their proper station?

Acciajoli. Have you not *your* king?

Psein. O! quite another matter! We have ours,
 True; but his taxes are for us; and then
 The blows . . . we give and take them, as may happen.

Acciajoli. We too may do the same, another day.

[*PSEIN expresses contempt.*

So! you imagine that your arms suffice
 To keep this kingdom down! War is a game
 Not of skill only, not of hazard only,
 No, nor of both united.

Psein. What the ball
 Is stuff with, I know not, nor ever lookt;
 I only know it is the very game
 I like to play at.

Acciajoli. Many are the chances.

Psein. Without the chances I would throw it up.
 Play me at Naples only five to one,
 I take the odds.

Acciajoli. All are not Neapolitans.

Psein. Then strike off three.

Acciajoli. Some Normans.

Psein. Then my sword

Must be well whetted and my horse well fed,
And my poor memory well poked for prayers.
And, hark ye! I should like one combatant
As well as twenty, of that ugly breed.

Lord Seneschal, be ready at your post.

Acciajoli. I trust I shall be.

Psein. At what hour?

Acciajoli. Not yet.

Psein. Ay, but the queen must fix it.

Acciajoli. She inclines

To peace.

Psein. I know it; but for flight ere peace.

Acciajoli. Flight is not in the movements of our queen.

Psein. Departure then.

Acciajoli. Sir! should she will departure,
Breasts are not wanting to repel the charge
Of traitor or intruder.

Psein. Here is one,

Lord Seneschal! as ready to defend her
As any mail'd with iron or claspt with gold.
Doubtest thou? Doubt no longer.

[*Shows the glove.*]

Acciajoli. Whose is that?

Psein. The names we venerate we rarely speak;
And love beats veneration out and out.
I will restore it at the vessel's side,
And ask it back again when she is safe
And the less happy lady whom you serve.
It then behoves me to retrace my steps
And rally my few countrymen for safety.

SCENE V.

A HERALD enters. PSEIN goes.

Acciajoli. Whence come you, sir?

Herald. From Gaeta.

Acciajoli. What duty?

Herald. To see the queen.

Acciajoli. The queen you can not see:
Her consort died too lately.

Herald. Therefore I
Must see the queen.

Acciajoli. If you bring aught that throws
Light upon that dark treason, speak at once.

Herald. The light must fall from Rome. Cola Rienzi,
Tribune of Rome, and arbiter of justice
To Europe, tarrying on the extremest verge
Of our dominions, to inspect the castles,
Heard the report, brought with velocity
Incredible, which man gave man along
The land, and ship gave ship along the coast.

Acciajoli. Then 'twas prepared: and those who spread the news
Perpetrated the deed.

Herald. Such promptitude
Could not escape the Tribune. He demands
The presence of Giovanna queen of Naples,
To plead her cause before him.

Acciajoli. Is Rienzi
A king? above a king?

Herald. Knowest thou not
Rienzi is the tribune of the people?

Acciajoli. Sir! we have yet to learn by what authority
He regulates the destiny of princes.

Herald. The wisest men have greatly more to learn
Than ever they have learnt: there will be children
Who in their childhood shall know more than we do.
Lord Seneschal! I am but citizen
In my own city, nor among the first,
But I am herald here, and, being herald,
Let no man dare to question me. The king
Of Hungary is cited to appear,
Since in his name are accusations made
By some at Naples, which your queen must answer.

Acciajoli. Her dignity and wisdom will decide,
I am well pleas'd that those around the castle
Threw no obstruction in your way.

Herald. The soldiers
Resisted my approach; but instantly
Two holy friars spread out their arms in front,
And they parted like the Red-sea waves,
And grounded arms before me.

Acciajoli. Then no hinderance
To our most gracious queen, should she comply?

Herald. None; for Rienzi's name is spell against it.

Giovanna (enters). O! is there one to hear me patiently?
Let me fly to him!

Acciajoli. Hath our sovran heard
The order of Rienzi?

Giovanna. Call it not
An order, lest my people be incenst.

Herald. Lady! if plainly hath been understood
The subject of my mission, the few words
Containing it may be unread by me.
Therefore I place them duly in the hands
Of the Lord Seneschal. With brief delay
Your presence were desirable.

Giovanna. What time
Return you, sir?

Herald. This evening.

Giovanna. And by sea?

Herald. In the same bark which brought me.

Giovanna. If some ship
More spacious be now lying at the mole,
I will embark in that; if not, in yours,
And we will sail together. You have power
Which I have not in Naples; and the troops,
And those who seem to guide them, hear your words.

Herald. Lady! not mine; but there are some they hear.

Giovanna. Entreat them to let pass the wretched ones
Who fancied I could succour them within,
Whom famine must soon seize. Until they pass
I can not. Dear is fame to me; but far
Be Fame that stalks to us o'er hurried graves.
Lord Seneschal! see Rome's ambassador
Be duly honoured: then, whatever else
Is needful for departure, be prepared.

ACT III.

SCENE I. ROME. CAPITOL.

RIENZI and the POPE's NUNCIO.

Nuncio. With infinite affliction, potent Tribune!
The Holiness of our Lord the Sovran Pontiff
Learns that Andrea, prince of Hungary,
Hath, in the palace of Aversa, been
Traitorously slain. Moreover, potent Tribune!
The Holiness of our Lord the Sovran Pontiff,
Hears sundry accusations: and, until
The guilt or innocence of those accused
Be manifested, in such wise as He,
The Holiness of our Lord, the Sovran Pontiff
Shall deem sufficient, he requires that troops
March from his faithful city, and possess

Otranto and Taranto, Brindisi
 And Benevento, Capua and Bari,
 Most loving cities and most orthodox.
 And some few towns and villages beside,
 Yearning for peace in his paternal breast,
 He would especially protect from tumult.
 Laying his blessing on your head thro' me
 The humblest of his servitors, thus speaks
 The Holiness of our Lord the Sovran Pontiff.

Rienzi (seated). Lord Cardinal! no truer stay than me
 Hath, on Italian or Provençal ground,
 The Holiness of our Lord the Sovran Pontiff.
 The cares that I have taken off his hands
 The wisdom of his Holiness alone
 Can measure and appreciate. As for troops,
 That wisdom, seeing them so far remote,
 Perhaps may judge somewhat less accurately.
 The service of his Holiness requires
 All these against his barons. Now, until
 I hear the pleas of Hungary and Naples,
 My balance is suspended. Those few cities,
 Those towns and villages, awhile must yearn
 For foreign troops among them; but meantime
 Having the blessing of his Holiness,
 May wait contentedly for any greater
 His Holiness shall opportunely grant.
 Kissing the foot of his Beatitude,
 Such, my lord Cardinal, is the reply
 From his most faithful Cola di Rienzi,
 Unworthy tribune of his loyal city.

Nuncio. We may discuss anew this weighty question
 On which his Holiness's heart is moved.

Rienzi. If allocution be permitted me
 To his most worthy Nuncio, let me say
 The generous bosom would enfold about it
 The friend, the neighbour, the whole human race,
 And scarcely then rest satisfied. With all
 These precious coverings round it, poisonous tongues
 Can penetrate. We lowly men alone
 Are safe, and hardly we. Who would believe it?
 People have heretofore been mad enough
 To feign ambition (of all deadly sins
 Surely the deadliest) in our lord the pope's
 Protecting predecessors! Their paternal
 Solitude these factious thus denounced.
 Ineffable the pleasure I foretaste

In swearing to his Holiness what calm
Reluctance you exhibited ; the same
His Holiness himself might have express,
In bending to the wishes of those cities
So orthodox and loving ; and how fully
You manifested, by your faint appeal,
You sigh as deeply to decline, as they
Sigh in their fears and fondness to attain.

[NUNCIO going.

Help my lord cardinal. This weather brings
Stiffness of joints, rheums, shooting pains. Way there !

SCENE II. CAPITOL.

RIENZI, ACCIAJOLI, PETRARCA, and BOCCACCIO.

Boccaccio. If there was ever upon throne one mind
More pure than other, one more merciful,
One better stored with wisdom, of its own
And carried from without, 'tis hers, the queen's.
Exert, my dear Francesco, all that eloquence
Which kings and senates often have obeyed
And nations have applauded.

Petrarca. My Boccaccio !
Thou knowest Rome, thou knowest Avignon :
Altho' so brief a time the slave of power,
Rienzi is no longer what he was,
Popes are what they have ever been. They all
Have families for dukedoms to obey.

Boccaccio. O ! had each holy father twenty wives
And each wife twenty children ? then 'twere hard
To cut out dukedoms for so many mouths,
And the well-furred tiara could not hatch
So many golden goose-eggs under it.

Petrarca. We must unite our efforts.

Boccaccio. Mine could add
Little to yours ; I am not eloquent.

Petrarca. Thou never hast received from any court
Favour or place ; I, presents and preferments.

Boccaccio. I am but little known : for dear to me
As fame is, odious is celebrity.

Petrarca. I see not why it should be.

Boccaccio. If no eyes
In the same head are quite alike, ours may
Match pretty well, yet somewhat differ too.

Petrarca. Should days like yours waste far from men and
friends ?

Boccaccio. Leave me one flame ; then may my breast dilate
 To hold, at last, two (or almost two) friends :
 One would content me : but we must, forsooth,
 Speculate on more riches than we want.
 Moreover, O Francesco ! I should shrink
 From scurril advocate, cross-questioning
 Whom knew I in the palace ? whence my knowledge ?
 How long ? where first ? whence introduced ? for what ?
 Since in all law-courts I have ever entered,
 The least effrontery, the least dishonesty,
 Has lain among the prosecuted thieves.

Petrarca. We can not now much longer hesitate ;
 He hath his eye upon us.

Boccaccio. Not on me ;
 He knows me not.

Petrarca. On me it may be then,
 Altho' some years, no few have intervened
 Since we last met.

Boccaccio. But frequent correspondence
 Retains the features, nay, brings back the voice ;
 The very shoe creaks when the letter opens.

Petrarca. Rienzi was among those friends who sooner
 Forget than are forgotten.

Boccaccio. They who rise
 Lose sight of things below, while they who fall
 Grasp at and call for anything to help.

Petrarca. I own I cease to place reliance on him.
 Virtue and Power take the same road at first,
 But they soon separate, and they meet no more.

Usher. The Tribune, ser Francesco ! claims your presence.

Rienzi. Petrarca ! pride of Italy ! most welcome !

Petrarca. Tribune of Rome ! I bend before the fasces.

Rienzi. No graver business in this capitol,
 Or in the forum underneath its walls,
 Or in the temples that once rose between,
 Engaged the thoughts of Rome. No captive queen
 Comes hither, none comes tributary, none
 Courting dominion or contesting crown.
 Thou knowest who submits her cause before
 The majesty that reigns within this court.

Petrarca. Her, and her father, and his father knew I,
 Nor three more worthy of my love and honour
 (Tho' born to royalty) adorn our earth.
 Del Balzo hath supplied the facts : all doubts
 On every side of them hath Acciajoli
 Clear'd up.

Rienzi. But some will spring where others fall,
When intellect is strongly exercised.

Petrarca. The sources of our intellect lie deep
Within the heart; what rises to the brain
Is spray and efflorescence; they dry up.

Rienzi. However, we must ponder. So then truly,
Petrarca! thou dost think her innocent?

Petrarca. Thou knowest she is innocent, Rienzi!
Write then thy knowledge higher than my belief:
The proofs lie there before thee.

Rienzi. But these papers
Are ranged against them.

Petrarca. Weigh the characters
Of those who sign them.

Rienzi. Here the names are wanting.

Petrarca. Remove the balance then, for none is needed.
Against Del Balzo, upright, stern, severe,
What evidence can struggle?

Rienzi. From Del Balzo
The Queen herself demands investigation
Into the crime, and bids him spare not one
Partaker.

Petrarca. Worthy of her race! Now ask
If I believe her guiltless.

Rienzi. May we prove it!

Acciajoli. She shall herself, if needful. Should more answers
Be wanted from me, I am here before
That high tribunal where the greatest power
And wisdom are united; where the judge
Gives judgment in the presence of such men
As Rome hath rarely seen in ancient days,
Never in later. What they hear, the world
Will hear thro' future ages, and rejoice
That he was born in this to raise an arm
Protecting such courageous innocence.

Rienzi. Lord Seneschal of Naples, Acciajoli!
We have examined, as thou knowest, all
The documents before us, and regret
That death withholds from like examination
(Whether as witnesses or criminals)
Some inmates of your court, the most familiar
With queen Giovanna.

Acciajoli. Did she then desire
Their death? as hidden enemies accuse her
Of one more awful. I presume the names
Of the young Sancia, count Terlizzi's bride,

And hers who educated that pure mind
By pointing out Giovanna, two years older,
Filippa of Catana.

Rienzi. They are gone
Beyond our reach.

Acciajoli. Sent off, no doubt, by one
Who loved them most, who most loved her! sent off
After their tortures, whether into Scotland
Or Norway or Laponia, the same hand
Who wrote those unsign'd papers may set forth.

Rienzi. I cannot know their characters.

Acciajoli. I know them
Loyal and wise and virtuous.

Rienzi. But Filippa
Guided, 'tis said, the counsels of king Robert.

Acciajoli. And were those counsels evil? If they were,
How happens it that both in life and death
The good king Robert was his appellation?

Rienzi. How many kings are thrust among the stars
Who had become the whipping-post much better?

Acciajoli. Was Robert one?

Rienzi. We must confess that Robert
Struck down men's envy under admiration.

Acciajoli. If then Filippa guided him, what harm?

Rienzi. She might have fear'd that youth would less obey
Her prudent counsels than experience did.

Acciajoli. Well might she: hence for many a year her cares
Have been devoted to our queen's instruction,
Together with queen Sancia, not without:
And neither of these ladies (I now speak
As president) have meddled with our councils.

Rienzi. When women of low origin are guides
To potentates of either sex, 'tis ill.

Acciajoli. I might have thought so; but Filippa showed
That female wisdom much resembles male;
Gentler, not weaker; leading, not controlling.
Again! O tribune! touching low estate.
More vigorously than off the downier cradle
From humble crib springs up the lofty mind.

Rienzi. Strong arguments, and cogent facts, are these!

[To an Usher.

Conduct the queen of Naples into court.

Acciajoli. That, by your leave, must be my office, sir!

SCENE III.

RIENZI, ACCIAJOLI, GIOVANNA, and PRIOR of the CELESTINES.

Rienzi. Giovanna, queen of Naples! we have left you
A pause and space for sorrow to subside;
Since, innocent or guilty, them who lose
So suddenly the partner of their hours,
Grief seizes on, in that dark interval.
Pause too and space were needful, to explore
On every side such proofs as may acquit
Of all connivance at the dreadful crime
A queen so wise, and held so virtuous,
So just, so merciful. It can not be
(We hope) that she who would have swept away
Playthings of royal courts and monkish cells,
The instruments of torture, that a queen
Who in her childhood visited the sick,
Nor made a luxury or pomp of doing it,
Who placed her little hand, as we have heard,
In that where fever burnt, nor feared contagion,
Should slay her husband.

Acciajoli. Faintness overpowers her,
Not guilt. The racks you spoke of, O Rienzi!
You have applied, and worse than those you spoke of.

Rienzi. Gladly I see true friends about her.

Acciajoli. Say
About her not; say in her breast she finds
The only friend she wants . . . her innocence.

Rienzi. People of Rome! your silence, your attention,
Become you. With like gravity our fathers
Beheld the mighty and adjudged their due.
Sovran of Naples, Piedmont, and Provence,
Among known potentates what other holds
Such wide dominions as this lady here,
Excepting that strong islander whose sword
Has cut France thro', and lies o'er Normandy,
Anjou, Maine, Poitou, Brittany, Touraine,
And farthest Gascony; whose hilt keeps down
The Grampians, and whose point the Pyrenees?
Listen! she throws aside her veil, that all
May hear her voice, and mark her fearless mien.

Giovanna. I say not, O Rienzi! I was born
A queen; nor say I none but God alone
Hath right to judge me. Every man whom God
Endows with judgment arbitrates my cause.
For of that crime am I accused which none

Shall hide from God or man. All are involved
 In guilt who aid, or screen, or spare, the guilty.
 Speak, voice of Rome! absolve me or condemn,
 As proof, or, proof being absent, probability,
 Points on the scroll of this dark tragedy.
 Speak, and spare not: fear nought but mighty minds,
 Nor those, unless where lies God's shadow, truth.

Rienzi. Well hast thou done, O queen, and wisely chosen
 Judge and defenders. Thro' these states shall none
 Invade thy realm. I find no crime in thee.
 Hasten to Naples! for against its throne
 Ring powerful arms and menace thy return.

[ACCAJOLI leads the Queen out.]

Prior of the Celestines. Thou findest in that wily queen no crime.
 So be it! and 'tis well. But tribune, know,
 Ill chosen are the praises thou bestowest
 On her immunity from harm, in touching
 The fever'd and infected. She was led
 Into such places by unholy hands.
 I come not an accuser: I would say
 Merely, that Queen Giovanna was anointed
 By the most potent sorceress, Filippa
 The Catanese.

Rienzi. Anointed Queen?

Prior. Her palms
 Anointed, so that evil could not touch them.
 Filippa, with some blacker spirits, helpt
 To cure the sick, or comfort them unduly.

Rienzi. Among the multitude of sorceresses
 I find but very few such sorceries,
 And, if the Church permitted, would forgive them,
Prior. In mercy we, in mercy, should demur.

Rienzi. How weak is human wisdom! what a stay
 Is such stout wicker-work about the fold!

Prior. Whether in realms of ignorance, in realms
 By our pure light and our sure faith unblest,
 Or where the full effulgence bursts from Rome,
 No soul, not one upon this varied earth,
 Is unbeliever in the power of sorcery:
 How certain then its truth, the universal
 Tongue of mankind, from east to west, proclaims.

Rienzi. With reverential and submissive awe,
 People of Rome! leave we to holy Church
 What comes not now before us, nor shall come,
 While matters which our judgments can decide
 Are question'd, while crown'd heads are bowed before us.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. RIENZI'S OWN APARTMENT IN THE CAPITOL.

RIENZI, FRIAR ANSELMO, and poor NEAPOLITANS.

Rienzi. Who creeps there yonder with his fingers folded?
Hither; what wantest thou? who art thou, man?

Anselmo. The humblest of the humble, your Anselmo.

Rienzi. Mine?

Anselmo. In all duty.

Rienzi. Whence art thou?

Anselmo. From Naples.

Rienzi. What askest thou?

Anselmo. In the most holy names
Of Saint Euphemia and Saint Cunigund!
And in behalf of these poor creatures ask I
Justice and mercy.

Rienzi. On what count?

Anselmo. On life.

Rienzi. Who threatens it in Rome?

Anselmo. In Rome none dare
Under the guardianship of your tribunal.
But Naples is abandoned to her fate
By those who ruled her. Those, alas! who ruled her
Heaven has abandoned. Crimes, outrageous crimes,
Have swept them from their people. We alone
In poverty are left for the protection
Of the more starving populace. O hear,
Merciful Tribune! hear their cries for bread! [*All cry out.*

Anselmo (to them). Ye should not have cried now, ye fools!
and choak ye!

Rienzi. That worthy yonder looks well satisfied:
All of him, but his shoulder, seems at ease.

Anselmo. Tommaso! art thou satisfied?

Tommaso. Not I.

A fish upon my bread, at least on Friday,
Had done my body and my soul some good,
And quicken'd one and t'other at thanksgiving.
Anchovies are rare cooks for garlic, master!

[*To RIENZI.*

Anselmo. I sigh for such delusion.

Rienzi. So do I.

How came they hither?

Anselmo. By a miracle.

Rienzi. My honest friends! what can we do for you
At Rome?

Anselmo. Speak. Does the Devil gripe your tongues?

Mob. We crave our daily bread from holy hands,
And from none other.

Riensi. Then your daily bread
Ye will eat hot, and delicately small.
Frate Anselmo, what means this?

Anselmo. It means,
O tribune, that the lady, late our queen,
Hath set aside broad lands and blooming gardens
For hospitals; which, with unrighteous zeal,
She builds with every church. There *Saint Antonio*
Beyond the gate of Capua! there *Saint Martin*
On *Mount Saint-Eremo!* there *Saint Maria*
Incoronata! All their hospitals!

No one hath monastery! no one nuns!

Riensi. Hard, hard upon you! But what means were yours
To bring so many supplicants so long
A journey with you?

Anselmo. 'Twas a miracle.

Riensi. Miracles never are of great duration.
Hurry them back! Hurry ye while it lasts!
I would not spoil it with occult supplies,
I reverence holy men too much for that,
And leave them to the only power above them.
Possibly quails and manna may not cross you
If you procrastinate. But, setting out
To-morrow, by whichever gate seems luckiest,
And questioning your honest mules discreetly,
I boldly answer for it, ye shall find
By their mild winking (should they hold their tongues)
The coin of our lord Clement on the back
Of one or other, in some well-thonged scrip.

Anselmo (aside). Atheist!

Tommaso. Ah no, father! Atheists
Never lift up their eyes as you and he do.

[*Going together.*]

I know one in a twinkling. For example,
Cosimo Cappa was one. He denied
A miracle his mother might have seen
Not twelve miles from his very door, when she
Was heavy with him; and the saint who workt it,
To make him one, cost thirteen thousand ducats.
There was an atheist for you! that same Cappa . . .
I saw him burnt . . . a fine fresh lusty man.
I warrant I remember it: I won
A heap of chesnuts on that day at morra.

A sad poor place this Rome ! look where you will,
 No drying paste here dangles from the windows
 Across the sunny street, to make it cheerful ;
 And much I doubt if, after all its fame,
 The nasty yellow river breeds anchovies.

SCENE II. RIENZI'S OWN APARTMENT IN THE CAPITOL.

RIENZI and his WIFE.

Rienzi. I have been sore perplext, and still am so.

Wife. Yet falsehood drops from truth, as quicksilver
 From gold, and ministers to purify it.

Rienzi. The favour of the people is uncertain.

Wife. Gravely thou givest this intelligence.
 Thus there are people in a northern isle
 Who tell each other that the weather changes,
 And, when the sun shines, say the day looks bright,
 And, when it shines not, there are clouds above.

Rienzi. Some little fief, some dukedom, we'll suppose,
 Might shelter us against a sudden storm.

Wife. Not so : we should be crusht between two rocks,
 The people and the barons. Both would hate thee,
 Both call thee traitor, and both call thee truly.

Rienzi. When we stand high, the shaft comes slowly up ;
 We see the feather, not the point ; and that
 Loses what venom it might have below.

Wife. I thought the queen of Naples occupied
 Thy mind entirely.

Rienzi. From the queen of Naples
 My hopes originate. The pope is willing
 To grant me an investiture when I
 Have given up to him, by my decree,
 Some of her cities.

Wife. Then it is untrue
 Thou hast acquitted her of crime.

Rienzi. I did ;
 But may condemn her yet : the king of Hungary
 Is yet unheard : there are strong doubts : who knows
 But stronger may arise ! My mind misgives.
 Tell me thou thinkest her in fault. One word
 Would satisfy me.

Wife. Not in fault, thou meanest.

Rienzi. In fault, in fault, I say.

Wife. No, not in fault,
 Much less so foully criminal.

Rienzi. O! could I
Absolve her!

Wife. If her guilt be manifest,
Absolve her not; deliver her to death.

Rienzi. From what the pope and king of Hungary
Adduce . . . at present not quite openly . . .
I must condemn her.

Wife. Dost thou deem her guilty?

Rienzi. O God! I wish she were! I must condemn her.

Wife. Husband! art thou gone mad?

Rienzi. None are much else

Who mount so high, none can stand firm, none look
Without a fear of falling: and, to fall! . . .

No, no, 'tis not, 'tis not the worst disgrace.

Wife. What hast thou done? Have thine eyes seen corruption?

Rienzi. Thinkest thou gold could move Rienzi? gold
(Working incessantly demoniac miracles)
Could chain down Justice, or turn blood to water?

Wife. Who scorns the ingot may not scorn the mine.

Gold may not move thee, yet what brings gold may.

Ambition is but avarice in mail,
Blinder, and often weaker. Is there strength,

Cola! or speed, in the oblique and wry?

Of blood turn'd into water talkest thou?

Take heed thou turn not water into blood

And show the pure impure. If thou do this,

Eternal is the stain upon thy hand;

Freedom thro' thee will be the proud man's scoff,

The wise man's problem; even the slave himself

Will rather bear the scourge than trust the snare.

Thou hast brought large materials, large and solid,

To build thy glory on: if equity

Be not the base, lay not one stone above.

Thou hast won the influence over potent minds,

Relax it not. Truth is a tower of strength,

No Babel one: it may be rais'd to heaven

And will not anger God.

Rienzi. Who doubts my justice?

Wife. Thyself. Who prosecutes the criminal?

Thyself? Who racks the criminal? Thyself.

Unhappy man! how maim'd art thou! what limb

Proportionate! what feature undisfigured!

Go, bathe in porphyry . . . thy leprosy

Will never quit thee: thou hast eaten fruit

That brings all sins, and leaves but death behind.

Rienzi. But hear me.

Wife. I have heard thee, and such words
As one who loves thee never should have heard.

Rienzi. I must provide against baronial power
By every aid, external and internal,
For, since my elevation, many friends
Have fallen from me.

Wife. Throw not off the rest.
What! is it then enough to stand before
The little crags and sweep the lizards down
From their warm basking-place with idle wand,
While under them the drowsy panther lies
Twitching his paw in his dark lair, and waits
Secure of springing when thy back is turned?
Popular power can stand but with the people:
Let them trust none a palm above themselves,
For sympathy in high degrees is frozen.

Rienzi. Such are my sentiments.

Wife. Thy sentiments!
They were thy passion. Are they sentiments?
Go! there's the distaff in the other room.

Rienzi. Thou blamed'st not what seemed ambition in me.

Wife. Because it gave thee power to bless thy country.
Stood tribunitial ever without right?
Sat ever papal without perfidy?
O tribune! tribune! whom weak woman teaches!
If thou deceivest men, go, next enslave them;
Else is no safety. Would'st thou that?

Rienzi. To make
Any new road, some plants there must be crusht,
And not the higher only, here and there.
Whoever purposes great good, must do
Some partial evil.

Wife. Thou hast done great good
Without that evil yet. Power in its prime
Is beautiful, but sickened by excess
Collapses into loathsomeness; and scorn
Shrivels to dust its fierce decrepitude.

Rienzi. Am I deficient then in manly deeds,
Or in persuasion?

Wife. Of all manly deeds
Oftentimes the most honest are the bravest,
And no persuasion so persuades as truth.

Rienzi. Peace! peace! confound me not.

Wife. The brave, the wise,
The just, are never, even by foes, confounded.
Promise me but one thing. If in thy soul

Thou thinkest this young woman free from blame,
 Thou wilt absolve her, openly, with honour,
 Whatever Hungary, whatever Avignon,
 May whisper or may threaten.

Rienzi. If my power
 Will bear it; if the sentence will not shake
 This scarlet off my shoulder.

Wife. Cola! Cola!

SCENE III. TRIBUNAL IN THE CAPITOL.

RIENZI, CITIZENS, &C.

Citizen. There is a banner at the gates.

Rienzi. A banner!

Who dares hoist banner at the gates of Rome?

Citizen. A royal crown surmounts it.

Rienzi. Down with it!

Citizen. A king, 'tis said, bears it himself in hand.

Rienzi. Trample it in the dust, and drag him hither.

What are those shouts? Look forth.

Usher (having looked out). The people cry
 Around four knights who bear a sable flag:
 One's helm is fashion'd like a kingly crown.

Rienzi. Strike off his head who let the accursed symbol
 Of royalty come within Roman gate:
 See this be done: then bind the bold offenders.

[LEWIS of HUNGARY enters.]

Who art thou?

Lewis. King of Hungary.

Rienzi. What brings thee?

Lewis. Tribune! thou knowest well what brings me hither
 Fraternal love, insulted honour, bring me.
 Thinkest thou I complain of empty forms
 Violated to chafe me? thinkest thou
 'Tis that I waited in the port of Trieste
 For invitation to my brother's wedding,
 Nor invitation came, nor embassy?
 Now creaks the motive. Silly masquerade
 Usurpt the place of tilt and tournament;
 No knight attended from without, save one,
 Our cousin of Taranto: why he came,
 Before all earth the dire event discloses.

Rienzi. Lewis of Hungary! it suits not us
 To regulate the laws of chivalry
 Or forms of embassies. We know there may be
 Less folly in the lightest festival

Than in the sternest and severest war.
 Patiently have we heard ; as patiently
 Hear thou, in turn, the accused as the accuser ;
 Else neither aid nor counsel hope from me.

Lewis. I ask no aid of thee, I want no counsel,
 I claim but justice : justice I will have,
 I will have vengeance for my brother's death.

Rienzi. My brother too was murdered. Was my grief
 Less deep than thine ? If greater my endurance,
 See what my patience brought me ! all these friends
 Around, and thee, a prince, a king, before me.
 Hear reason, as becomes a Christian knight.

Lewis. Ye always say to those who suffer wrong,
Hear reason ! Is not that another wrong ?
 He who throws fuel on a fiery furnace
 Cries, *Wait my signal for it ! blaze not yet !*
 Issue one edict more ; proclame, O tribune,
 Heat never shall be fire, nor fire be flame.

Rienzi. King Lewis ! I do issue such an edict
 (Absurd as thou mayest deem it) in this place.
 Hell hath its thunders, loud and fierce as Heaven's,
 Heaven is more great and glorious in its calm :
 In this clear region is the abode of Justice.

Lewis. Was it well, tribune, to have heard the cause,
 Nay and to have decided it, before
 Both sides were here ? The murderess hath departed,
 And may have won her city from the grasp
 Of my brave people, who avenge their prince,
 The mild Andrea. Justice I will have,
 I will have vengeance.

Rienzi. Every man may ask
 If what I do is well : and angry tones,
 Tho' unbecoming, are not unforgiven
 Where virtuous grief bursts forth. But, king of Hungary,
 We now will change awhile interrogations.
 I ask thee was it well to bring with thee
 Into our states a banner that blows up
 The people into fury ? and a people
 Not subject to thy sceptre or thy will ?
 We knew not of thy coming. When thy friends
 In Naples urged us to decide the cause,
 'Twas in thy name, as guardian to thy brother,
 Bringing against the queen such accusations,
 And so supported, that we ordered her
 To come before us and defend herself.
 She did it, nor delayed. The cardinal

Bishop of Orvieto and the Cardinal
Del Sangro on their part, on hers Del Balzo
And Acciajoli, have examined all
The papers, heard the witnesses, and signed
Their sentence under each. These we suggest
To the approval of thy chancery.

Lewis. Chanceries were not made for murderesses.

Rienzi. I am not learned like the race of kings,
Yet doth my memory hold the scanty lore
It caught betimes, and there I find it written,
Not in Hungarian nor in Roman speech,
Vengeance is mine. We execute the laws
Against the disobedient, not against
Those who submit to our award. The queen
Of Naples hath submitted. She is free,
Unless new proof and stronger be adduced
To warrant her recall into my presence.

Lewis. Recall'd she shall be then, and proof adduced.

Rienzi. We have detected falsehood in its stead.

Lewis. I will have justice, come it whence it may.

Rienzi. Cecco Mancino! read the law against
Those who accuse maliciously or lightly.

Mancino (reads). "Who shall accuse another, nor make good
His accusation, shall incur such fine,
Or such infliction of the scourge, as that
False accusation righteously deserves."

Rienzi. Fine cannot satisfy the wrongs that royalty
Receives from royalty.

Lewis. Wouldst thou inflict
The scourge on kings?

Rienzi. The licitor would, not I.

Lewis. What insult may we not expect ere long!
And yet we fare not worst from demagogues.
Those who have risen from the people's fist
Perch first upon their shoulders, then upon
Their heads, and then devour their addled brain.

Rienzi. We have seen such of old.

Lewis. Hast thou seen one
True to his feeder where power whistled shriller,
Shaking the tassels and the fur before him?

Rienzi. History now grows rather dim with me,
And memory less vivacious than it was:
No time for hawks, no tendency to hounds!

Lewis. Cold sneers are your calm judgments! Here at Rome
To raise false hopes under false promises
Is wisdom! and on such do we rely!

Rienzi. Wisdom with us is not hereditary,
Nor brought us from the woods in ermine-skins,
Nor pinned upon our tuckers ere we chew,
Nor offered with the whistle on bent knee,
But, King of Hungary! we can and do
In some reward it and in all revere;
We have no right to scoff at it, thou hast.
Cecco Mancino!

Mancino. Tribune most august!

Rienzi (*turning his back, and pointing to the eagles over his tribunal*). Furl me that flag. Now place it underneath
The eagles there. When the king goes, restore it.
[*Walks down from the tribunal.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. PALACE ON THE SHORE NEAR NAPLES.

GIOVANNA, ACCIAJOLI, DEL BALZO, LUIGI OF TARANTO, KNIGHTS.

Acciajoli. My queen! behold us in your native land
And lawful realm again!

Giovanna. But other sounds
Than greeted me in earlier days I hear,
And other sights I see; no friends among them
Who guided me in childhood, warn'd in youth,
And were scathed off me when that thunderbolt
Fell down between us. Are they lost so soon!
So suddenly! Why could they not have come?

[*To DEL BALZO.*]

Where is Filippa? where Terlizzi? where
Maternal Sancia?

Del Balzo. Such her piety,
Nor stranger nor insurgent hath presumed
To throw impediment before her steps.
For friends alike and enemies her prayers
Are daily heard among the helpless crowd,
But loudest for Giovanna; at which name,
Alone she bends upon the marble floor
That saintly brow, and stirs the dust with sighs.

Giovanna (*to Acciajoli*). Arms only keep her from me.
Whose are yonder?

Acciajoli. I recognise Calabrian; Tarantine.

Giovanna. Ah me! suspicion then must never cease!
Never, without Luigi, Tarantine
Arms glitter in the field. Even without him

(Which can not be) his troops in my defence
Would move again those odious thoughts, among
My easy people, guileless and misled.

Del Balso. His duty and his fealty enforce
What loyalty and honour would persuade.
Taranto is a fief: Taranto's prince
Must lead his army where his suzerain
Commands, or where, without commanding, needs.

Acciajoli. He can not see your city in your absence
A prey to lawless fury, worse than war.

Del Balso. Ay, and war too: for those who came as pilgrims
And penitents, to kiss the holy frock
Of father Rupert, spring up into soldiers;
And thus are hundreds added to the guards
Which that most powerful friar placed around
Him whom we mourn for. Three strong companies
(Once only eight score each) are form'd within
The conquered city. Canopies of state
Covered with sable cloth parade the streets,
And crucifixes shed abundant blood
Daily from freshened wounds; and virgins' eyes
Pour torrents over faces drawn with grief.
What saint stands unforgotten? what uncall'd?
Unincens'd? Many have come forth and walkt
Among the friars, many shouted loud
For vengeance. Even Luigi's camp stood wavering.
Only when first appeared your ship afar,
And over the white sail the sable flag,
Flapping the arms of Anjou, Naples, Hungary,
'Twas only then the rising mutiny
Paus'd, and subsided; only then Luigi,
Pointing at that trine pennant, turn'd their rage
Into its course.

Acciajoli. Perhaps the boat I see
Crossing the harbour, may bring some intelligence;
Perhaps he may, himself . . .

Giovanna. No! not before . . .
No! not at present . . . Must I be ungrateful?
Never! . . . ah, must I seem so?

SCENE II.

An Old Knight. From the prince
Commanding us, O lady! I am here
To lay his homage at his liege's feet.
He bids me say, how, at the first approach

Of that auspicious vessel, which brought hither
 Before her city's port its lawful queen,
 His troops demanded battle. In one hour
 He places in your royal hands the keys
 Of your own capital, or falls before it.

Giovanna. God grant he fall not! O return! return!
 Tell him there are enow . . . without, within . . .
 And were there not enow . . . persuade, implore . . .
 Show how Taranto wants him; his own country,
 His happy people . . . they must pine without him!
 O miserable me! O most ungrateful!
 Tell him I can not see him . . . I am ill . . .
 The sea disturbs me . . . my head turns, aches, splits . . .
 I can not see him . . . say it, sir! repeat it.

Knight. May-be, to-morrow . . .

Giovanna. Worse, to-morrow! worse!
 Sail back again . . . say everything . . . thanks, blessings.

Knight. Too late! Those thundering shouts are our assault . . .
 It was unfair without me; it was hard . . .
 Those are less loud.

Giovanna. Luigi is repulst!
 Perhaps is slain! slain if repulst . . . he said it.
 Yes; those faint shouts . . .

Knight. Lady, they are less loud
 Because the walls are between him and us.

Giovanna (falls on her knees). O! every saint in heaven be
 glorified!

Which, which hath saved him? [*Rises.*] Yet, O sir! if walls
 Are between him and us, then he is where
 His foes are! That is not what you intend?
 What is it? Cries again!

Knight. Not one were heard
 Had our prince dropt. The fiercest enemy
 Had shrunk appall'd from such majestic beauty
 Falling from heaven upon the earth beneath;
 And his own people with closed teeth had fought.
 Not for their lives, but for his death: no such
 Loud acclamation, lady! had been heard,
 But louder woe and wailing from the vanquisht.

Giovanna (aside). Praises to thee, O Virgin! who concealedst
 So kindly all my fondness, half my fears!

Acciajoli. The dust is rising nearer. Who rides hither
 In that black scarf? with something in his hand
 Where the sword should be. 'Tis a sword, I see,
 In form at least. The dust hangs dense thereon,
 Adhesive, dark.

Del Balzo. Seneschal! it was brighter
This morning, I would swear for it.

Accajoli. He throws
The bridle on the mane. He comes.

Del Balzo. He enters . . .
We shall hear all.

SCENE III.

Luigi of Taranto (throwing up his visor). Pardon this last disguise!

There was no time to take my visor off,
Scarcely to throw my sword down in the hall.
My royal cousin! let a worthier hand
Conduct you to the city you have won,
The city of your fathers.

Giovanna. O Luigi!

None worthier, none more loyal, none more brave.
Cousin! by that dear name I do adjure you!
Let others . . . these my friends and ministers . . .
Conduct me to the city you have won,
The city of your fathers, as of mine.
Let none who carried arms against the worst
Of my own people (for the very worst
Have only been misguided) come into it
With me, or after. Well thou governest
Thy vassals, O Luigi! Be thy dukedom
Increase in all the wealth my gratitude
Can add thereto, in chases, castles, towns;
But hasten, hasten thither! There are duties
(Alas! thou knowest like ourselves what duties)
I must perform. Should ever happier days
Shine on this land, my people will remember,
With me, they shine upon it from Taranto.

FRA RUPERT.

MALE CHARACTERS.

URBAN, *Pope*. BUTELLO, *his nephew*. CHARLES II., OF DURAZZO. OTHO, *husband of Giovanna*. FRA RUPERT. MAXIMIN. STEPHEN, *a shepherd*. HERALD. PAGE. MONK. CHANCELLOR. HIGH STEWARD. LORD CHAMBERLAIN. COUNSELLORS, SECRETARIES, OFFICERS, SOLDIERS.

FEMALE CHARACTERS.

GIOVANNA, *Queen*. MARGARITA, *her niece, wife of Charles*. AGNES OF DURAZZO. AGATHA, *sister of Maximin*.

ACT I.

SCENE I. VATICAN.

URBAN. DURAZZO.

Urban. Charles of Durazzo ! I have found thee worthy
To wear not only ducal coronet,
But in that potent, in that faithful hand,
To wield the royal sceptre.

Durazzo. Holy father !
I am half-ready to accept the charge,
When it befalls me, studying your content.

Urban. So be it. The crown of Naples is now vacant.

Durazzo. Good heavens ! is then my mother (let me call her
Even my mother, by whose bounteousness
My fortunes grew, my youth was educated)
Giovanna ! is she dead ?

Urban. To virtuous deeds,
Like those, she long hath been so.

Durazzo. His Beatitude,
The predecessor of your Holiness,
Who through her hands received his resting-place
At Avignon, when Italy rebell'd,
Absolved her from that heavy accusation
Her enemy the Hungarian brought against her.

Urban. I would not make Infallibility
Fallible, nor cross-question the absolved,
I merely would remove that stumbling-block
The kingdom from her.

Durazzo. Let another then
Aid such attempt.

Urban. Another shall.

Durazzo. Another
Nearer in blood is none.

Urban. Ere long, *Durazzo*,
I may look round and find one, if not nearer
In blood, yet fitter to perform the duties
Imposed on him by me.

Durazzo. None, holy father !
Is fitter.

Urban. Easy then are the conditions.
I would not place Butello, my own nephew,
Altho' deserving, and altho' besought
By many of the Neapolitans,
By many of the noble and the powerful
In every city of that realm, not him,
Durazzo ! would I place, against thy interests,
So high. But haply from thy gratitude
Accept I might in his behalf a dukedom
Or petty principality, dependent
Upon our See or (may-be) independent ;
For there are some who fain would have things so.
We must content the nations of the earth,
Whom we watch over, and who look to us
For peace and quiet in the world we rule.
Why art thou beating time so with thy foot
At every word I speak ? why look so stern
And jerk thy head and rest thy hand on hip ?
Thou art determin'd on it, art not thou ?

Durazzo. I can not, will not, move her from her seat,
So help me, God !

Urban. Impious young man ! reflect !
I give thee time ; I give thee all to-morrow.

SCENE II. A STREET IN NAPLES.

MAXIMIN. AGATHA.

Agatha (to herself). 'Twas he ! 'twas father Rupert.

Maximin (overhearing). Well ! what then ?
What wouldst thou with him ? thou must wait his leisure :
I have some business first with father Rupert.

Agatha (gazing anxiously). Can it be ? can it be ?

Maximin. Have not men sins
As well as women ? have not we our shivers,
Our scourers, soderers, calkers, and equippers ?

Agatha (*embracing him*). Forbear! O, for the love of God, forbear!

Heed him not, Maximin! or he will cast
Thy soul into perdition; he has mine.

Maximin. And who art thou, good woman?

Agatha. That fair name

Is mostly given with small courtesy,
As something tost at us indifferently
Or scornfully by higher ones. Thy sister
Was what thou callest her; and Rupert knows it.

Maximin. My sister? how! I had but Agatha.
Agatha!

Agatha. Maximin! we have not met
Since that foul day whose damps fell not on thee,
But fill'd our father's house while thou wert absent.
Thou, brother! brother! couldst not save my peace,
Let me save thine. He used to call me daughter,
And he may call thee son.

Maximin. The very word!
He began fathering early: seven years old
At most was father Rupert. Holy names
Are covered ways . . .

Agatha. . . To most unholy deeds.

Maximin. I see it; say no more: my sword is reddening
With blood that runs not yet, but soon shall run.

Agatha. Talk not thus loud, nor thus, nor here.

Maximin. Cross then

Over the way to that old sycamore;
The lads have left off playing at pallone.
I found out long ago his frauds, his treasons,
His murders; and he meditates a worse.
Agatha! let me look into thine eyes,
Try to be glad to see me: lift them up,
Nay, do not drop them, they are gems to me,
And make me very rich with only looking.
Thou must have been most fair, my Agatha!
And yet I am thy brother! Who would think it?

Agatha. Nor time nor toil deforms man's countenance,
Crime only does it: 'tis not thus with ours.
Kissing the seven nails burnt in below
Thy little breast, before they well had healed,
I thought thee still more beautiful with them.

Maximin. Those precious signs might have done better
for me.

Agatha. Only the honest are the prosperous.

Maximin. A little too on that side hath slept off.

Agatha. Recover it.

Maximin.

How can I ?

Agatha. Save the innocent.

Maximin.

But whom ?

Agatha. Giovanna.

Maximin.

Is the queen in danger ?

Agatha. Knowest thou not ?

Maximin. Hide we away our knowledge ;

It may do harm by daylight. I stand sentry

In many places at one time, and wink,

But am not drowsy. Trust me, she is safe.

And thou art then our Agatha ! 'Twould do

Our mother good, were she alive, to find thee ;

For her last words were, " Agatha, where art thou ? "

Agatha. Oh ! when our parents sorrow for our crimes,

Then is the sin complete.

Maximin.

She sorrows not,

And 'tis high time that thou should'st give it over.

Agatha. Alas ! our marrow, sinews, veins, dry up,

But not our tears ; they start with infancy,

Run on through life, and swell against the grave.

Maximin. I must now see Fra Rupert. Come thou after.

He shall admit thee. Pelt him with reproaches,

Then will I . . .

Agatha.

Brother ! not for these came I,

But to avert one crime from his o'erladen

Devoted head. He hath returned . . .

Maximin.

. . . To join

Giovanna with Andrea ? On with me :

We may forbid the banns a second time,

Urging perhaps a few impediments.

He hath been in some convent o'er the hill,

Doing sad penance on Calabrian rye,

How then couldst thou have heard about him ? how

Find he was here in Naples ?

Agatha.

There he should

And may have been : of late he was in Buda.

Maximin. You met in Buda then ?

Agatha.

Not met.

Maximin.

How know

His visit else, if he was there indeed ?

Agatha. While thou and Stephen Stourdza tended sheep

Together, I was in our mother's sight,

And mostly in her chamber ; for ill-health

Kept her from work. Often did Father Rupert

Pray by her, often hear her long confession,

Long, because little could be thought of for it.
 "Now what a comfort would it be to you,
 If this poor child read better," said the friar,
 "To listen while she read how blessed saints
 Have suffered, and how glorious their reward."
 My mother claspt her hands, and "What a comfort!"
 Echoed from her sick bosom.

"Hath she been
 Confirm'd?" he askt. "Yea, God be prais'd," sigh'd she.
 "We may begin then to infuse some salt
 Into this leaven," said the friar, well-pleas'd.
 "The work is righteous: we will find spare hours."
 She wept for joy.

Maximin. Weep then (if weep at all)
 Like her.

Agatha. Religious tracts soon tost aside,
 Florentine stories and Sicilian song
 Were buzz'd into my ears. The songs much pleas'd me,
 The stories (these he cull'd out from the book,
 He told me, as the whole was not for maids)
 Pleas'd me much less; for woman's faults were there.

Maximin. He might have left out half the pages, still
 The book had been a bible in its bulk
 If all were there.

Agatha. To me this well applies,
 Not to my sex.

Maximin. Thou art the best in it.
 Those who think ill of woman, hold the tongue
 Thro' shame, or ignorance of what to say,
 Or rifle the old ragbag for some shard
 Spotted and stale. On, prythee, with thy story.

Agatha. He taught me that soft speech, the only one
 For love; he taught me to repeat the words
 Most tender in it; to observe his lips
 Pronouncing them; and his eyes scorcht my cheek
 Into deep scarlet. With his low rich voice
 He sang the sadness of the laurel'd brow,
 The tears that trickle on the rocks around
 Valchiusa. "None but holy men can love
 As thou, Petrarca!" sighed he at the close.
 Graver the work he brought me next. We read
 The story of Francesca.

Maximin. What is that?
Agatha. Piteous, most piteous, for most guilty, passion.
 Two lovers are condemn'd to one unrest
 For ages. I now first knew poetry,

I had known song and sonnet long before :
 I sail'd no more amid the barren isles,
 Each one small self ; the mighty continent
 Rose and expanded ; I was on its shores.
 Fast fell the drops upon the page : he chided :
 " And is it punishment to be whirl'd on
 With our beloved thro' eternity ? "
 " Oh ! they were too unhappy, too unhappy ! "
 Sobb'd I aloud : " Who could have written this ? "
 " Tenderest of tender maids ! " cried he, and claspt me
 To his hot breast. Fear seiz'd me, faintness, shame.
 Be calm, my brother !

Maximin. Tell then other tale,
 And skip far on.

Agatha. The queen Elizabeth
 Heard of me at the nunnery where I served ;
 And the good abbess, not much loving one
 Who spoke two languages and read at night,
 Persuaded her that, being quick and needy,
 'Twould be by far more charitable in her
 To take me rather than some richer girl,
 To read by her, and lace her sandals on.
 I serv'd her several years, to her content.
 One evening after dusk, her closet-door
 Being to me at every hour unclosed,
 I was just entering, when some voice like his,
 Whispering, but deep, struck me : a glance sufficed :
 'Twas he. They neither saw me. Now occur'd
 That lately had Elizabeth said more
 And worse against Giovanna. " She might be
 Guiltless, but should not hold the throne of Naples
 From the sweet child her daughter : there were some
 Who had strong arms, and might again do better
 In cowl than fiercer spirits could in casque."
 Sleepless was I that night, afraid to meet
 The wretched man, afraid to join the queen.
 Early she rose, as usual ; earlier I.
 My sunken eyes and paleness were remarkt,
 And, whence ? was askt me.

" Those who have their brothers
 At Naples," I replied, " most gracious lady,
 May well be sleepless ; for rebellion shakes
 A throne unsteady ever."

First she paus'd,
 Then said, with greater blandness than before,
 " Indeed they may. But between two usurpers

What choice? Your brother may improve his fortune
 By loyalty, and teaching it. You wish
 To join him I see clearly, for his good;
 It may be yours: it may be ours: go then,
 Aid him with prudent counsel: the supply
 Shall not be wanting, secrecy must not."
 She urged my parting: the same hour we parted.

SCENE III. RUPERT'S CELL.

RUPERT. MAXIMIN.

Rupert. Thou hast delaid some little, Maximin.

Maximin. Frate! I met a woman in the street,
 And she might well delay me: guess now why.

Rupert. Who in the world can guess the why of women?

Maximin. She said she knew us both in Hungary.

Rupert. I now suspect the person: she is crazed.

Maximin. Well may she be, deprived of such a friend.

Rupert. No friend was ever mine in that false sex.
 I am impatient, Maximin.

Maximin. Impatient!

And so am I.

(Maximin throws open the door, and Agatha enters.)

Knowest thou this woman, Frate?

Rupert. Art thou crazed too? I know her? Not at all.

Maximin. And hast thou never known her? never toucht her?
 I only mean in giving her thy blessing.

Rupert. A drunken sailor in a desert isle
 Would not approach her.

Maximin (indignant). Not my sister?

Agatha. Scorners!
 Insulter!

(Aside.) He may have forgotten. Can he?
 He did not see me, would not look at me.

Maximin. My sword shall write her name upon thy midrif.
 Prepare!

Agatha. Hold! hold! Spare him yet, Maximin!
 How could I . . . and the man who . . .

Maximin. Speak it out,
 Worthless one!

Agatha. I am worthless. Let him live!
 Oh let him live!

Maximin. Thou lovest thy betrayer.

Agatha. The once beloved are unestranged by falsehood;
 They can not wholly leave us, tho' they leave us
 And never look behind.

Maximin. Wild! wild as hawk!

Rupert (on his knees). Vision of light, of love, of purity!
Dost thou revisit on the verge of earth
A soul so lost, to rescue it? Enough,
Agatha! Do not ask him for my life;
No, bid him slay me; bid him quench the days
That have in equal darkness set and risen
Since proud superiors banisht faithful love.
I am grown old; few years are left me, few
And sorrowful: my reason comes and goes:
I am almost as capable of crimes
As virtues.

Maximin. By my troth, a hundred-fold
More capable.

Rupert. Both ('tis Heaven's will) are over.
Here let me end my hours: they should have all
Been thine; he knows it; let him take them for thee;
And close thou here mine eyes where none behold,
Forgiving me . . . no, not forgiving me,
But praying, thou pure soul! for Heaven's forgiveness.

Maximin. I will not strike thee on the ground: rise up,
Then, when thou risest . . .

Agatha. Come away, my brother!

Rupert. Never, so help me saints! will I rise up:
I will breathe out my latest breath before her.

Maximin. It sickens a stout man to tread on toads. [*Goes.*]

Rupert (rising slowly, and passing a dagger through his fingers).
And the stout man might slip too, peradventure.

SCENE IV. PALACE NEAR NAPLES.

DURAZZO. MARGARITA.

Durazzo. The Pope is not averse to make me king.

Margarita. Do we not rule already?

Durazzo. Rule indeed!

Yes, one small dukedom. Any shepherd-dog
Might make his voice heard farther off than mine.

Margarita. Yet, my sweet Carlo, oftentimes I've heard you,
When people brought before you their complaints,
Swear at them for disturbing your repose,
Keeping you from your hounds, your bird, your ride
At evening, with my palfrey biting yours
Playfully (like two Christians) at the gate.

Durazzo. I love to see my bird soar in the air,
My hound burst from his puzzlement, and cite
His peers around him to arraign the boar.

Margarita. I think such semblances of high estate
Are better than the thing itself, more pleasant,
More wholesome.

Durazzo. And thinks too my *Margarita*
Of the gray palfrey? like a summer dawn
His dapper sides, his red and open nostrils,
And his fair rider like the sun just rising
Above it, making hill and vale look gay.

Margarita. She would be only what *Durazzo* thinks her.

Durazzo. Queenly he thinks her: queen he swears to make
her.

Margarita. I am contented; and should be, without
Even our rule: it brings us but few cares;
Yet some it brings us: why add more to them?

Durazzo. I never heard you talk so seriously.
Not long ago I little heeded state,
Authority, low voice, bent knee, kist hand:
The Pope has proved to me that, sure as any
Of the seven sacraments, the only way
To rise above temptation, is to seize
All that can tempt.

Margarita. There must be truth then in it.
But what will some men think when you deprive
Our aunt of her inheritance?

Durazzo. Men think!
Do not men always think what they should not?

Margarita. We hear so from the pulpit: it must be.
But we should never take what is another's.

Durazzo. Then you would never take another's child
To feed or clothe it.

Margarita. That is not my meaning.
I am quite sure my aunt has loved me dearly
All her life long, and loves me still; she often
(Kissing me) said, *How like thou art Maria!*
You know, *Durazzo*, how she loved my mother.

Durazzo. And she loved me no less: and we love her
And honour her.

Margarita. May we not then obey her?

Durazzo. The Pope, who teaches best, says otherwise.
Rule has been tedious to her all her reign,
And dangerous too.

Margarita. Make it less dangerous, make it
Less tedious.

Durazzo. She has chosen the duke *Otho*
To sit above thy husband, and all else.

Margarita. I think my husband is as brave as he.

Durazzo. I think so too : yet people doubt.

Margarita. Indeed !

Durazzo. And doubt they will, unless the truest knight
Of Margarita takes to horse, and scours
Her grandsire's realm of foreigners like Otho.

Margarita. If you do that, you must displeas our aunt.

Durazzo. Perhaps so : and hast never thou displeas'd her ?

Margarita. Never ; although I sometimes did what might.

Durazzo. I can not disappoint the Holy Father.

Margarita. Nay, God forbid ! But let me no more see her,
To hear her tell me all she did for me !

I can bear anything but evil tongues.

Durazzo. Then let us slink away and live obscurely. [*Going.*]

Margarita. Come back again . . Now ! would you leave me so ?
I have been thinking I must think no more
About the matter . . and am quite resolved.

Durazzo. My sweetest ! you have several female cousins ;
What are they ?

Margarita. Duchesses.

Durazzo. But are they queens ?

Margarita. No indeed ; and why should they be ? They
queens ?

Durazzo. I know but one well worthy of the title.

Margarita. Now, who can possibly that be, I wonder !

Durazzo. She on whose brow already Majesty
Hath placed a crown which no artificer
Can render brighter, or fit better, she
Upon whose lip Love pays the first obeisance. [*Saluting her.*]

Margarita. I know not how it is that you persuade
So easily . . not very easily

In this, however : yet, if but to teaze
And plague a little bit my sweet dear cousins,
Writing the kindest letters, telling them
That I am still, and shall be, just the same,
Their loving cousin ; nor in form alone ;
And if I write but seldom for the future,
'Tis only that we queens have many cares
Of which my charming cousins can know nothing.

Durazzo. What foresight, friendliness, and delicacy !

Margarita. Nothing on earth but these, in the idea
Of vexing . . no, not vexing . . only plaguing
(You know, love ! what I mean) my sweet dear cousins,
Could make me waver . . and then you, sad Carlo !

Durazzo. To please me . .

Margarita. Now, what would you have me say ?

SCENE V. NAPLES.

PAGE, GIOVANNA, AGNES, MAXIMIN.

Page. Fly, O my lady! Troops are near the city.*Giovanna.* There always are.*Page.* But strangers. People say

Durazzo . .

Giovanna. What of him?*Agnes.* Now then confessI knew him better. No reports have reacht us
These several days : the roads were intercepted.*Giovanna.* I will fear nothing : Otho watches over us.
Insects, that build their tiny habitations
Against sea-cliffs, become sea-cliffs themselves.
I rest on Otho, and no storm can shake me.*Agnes.* How different this Durazzo!*Giovanna.* All men are :But blame not without proof, or sign of proof,
Or accusation, any man so brave.*Page.* Lady! his soldiers on Camaldoli
Wave the green banner and march hitherward.*Giovanna* (after a pause). It can not be! my Carlo! my Carlino!
What! he who said his prayers with hands comprest
Between my knees, and would leap off to say them?
Impossible! He may have been deterred
From helping me : his people, his advisers,
May have been adverse . . but . . make war upon me!
O they have basely slandered thee, my Carlo!*Agnes.* He has been with the Holy Father lately.*Giovanna.* This would relieve me from all doubt, alone.*Agnes.* So kind as you have been to him! a mother!*Giovanna.* Remind me not of any benefitI may have done him : tell me his good deeds,
Speak not (if some there may have been) of mine :
'Twould but disturb the image that has never
Yet fallen from my breast, and never shall.
He was my child when my own child indeed,
My only one, was torn away from me.*Agnes.* And you have brooded o'er a marble egg,
Poor darkling bird!*Giovanna.* O Agnes! Agnes! spare me.Let me think on . . how pleasant 'twas to follow
In that Carlino, in that lovely boy,
The hidings of shy love, its shame, its glee,
Demurest looks at matters we deem light,

And, well worth every lesson ever taught,
Laughter that loosens graver, and that shakes
Our solemn gauds into their proper place.

Maximin (out of breath). The castle-gates are open for one moment . . .

Seize them and enter . . . Crowds alone impede
Durazzo, and not arms.

Agnes. Do you believe

His treason now?

Giovanna. Peace, peace! 'tis hard, 'tis hard!

ACT II.

SCENE I. RUPERT'S CELL.

RUPERT and MAXIMIN.

Rupert (alone). I've dogged him to the palace: there's some treachery.

Giovanna . . . and that witch, too, Agatha . . .
Why not all three together? Sixty miles
From Naples there is Muro. Now, a word
Was dropt upon it. We must be humane.
But, one more trial first to make him serve
In 'stablishing the realm. I fain must laugh
To think what creatures 'stablish realms, and how.

(MAXIMIN enters.)

Well, Maximin! We live for better days
And happier purports. Couldst thou not devise
Something that might restore the sickened state,
And leave our gracious king the exercise
Of his good will, to give them companies
Who now are ensigns? Ah brave Maximin!
I do remember when thou wert but private.
Psein, Klapwrath, Zinga, marcht, and made thee way.
Nothing in this our world would fain stand still.
The earth we tread on labours to set free
Its fires within, and shakes the mountain-heads;
The animals, the elements, all move,
The sea before us, and the sky above,
And angels on their missions between both.
Fortune will on. There are whom happiness
Makes restless with close constancy; there are
Who tire of the pure air and sunny sky,
And droop for clouds as if each hair were grass.

No wonder then should more aspiring souls
Be weary of one posture, one dull gloom
All the day through, all the long day of life.

Maximin (gapes). Weary! ay am I. Can I soon be captain?

Rupert. Why not?

Maximin. And then what service?

Rupert.

Queen Giovanna

Is blockt up in the castle, as thou knowest ;
Was not my counsel wise, to keep thee out ?
Famine had else consumed thee ; she spares none.
Charles of Durazzo, our beloved king,
Presses the siege ; and, when the queen gives up,
Thou art the man I prophesy to guard her.
There are some jewels : lightly carried in,
A thousand oxen cannot haul them forth ;
But they may drop at Muro, one by one,
And who should husband them save Maximin ?

Maximin (pretending alarm). I will not leave my sister out of sight :

She ne'er must fall again.

Rupert. Forefend it, heaven !

I might be weak ! She would indeed be safe
Where the queen is ! But who shall have the heart
To shut her up ? What has she done ? Her brother
Might be a comfort to her ; and the queen
And some few ladies trust her and caress her.
But, though the parks and groves and tofts around,
And meadows, from their first anemones
To their last saffron-crocuses, though all
Open would be, to her, if not to them,
And villagers and dances, and carousals
At vintage-time, and panes that tremble, partly
By moon-ray, partly by guitar beneath,
Yet might the hours, without street-views, be dull.

Maximin. Don't tell her so. Get her once there. But how ?
Beside, the queen will never trust Hungarians.
There would be mortal hatred. Is there fire
Upon the hearth ?

Rupert. None.

Maximin. Why then rub your hands ?

SCENE II. CASTEL-NUOVO.

GIOVANNA and AGNES.

Giovanna. 'Tis surely wrong that those who fight for us
So faithfully, so wretchedly should perish ;

That thriftless jewels sparkle round your temples
While theirs grow dank with famine.

Agnes. Now I see,
O my poor queen! the folly of refusal,
When they had brought us safety.

Giovanna. Not quite that,
To me at least, but sustenance and comfort
To our defenders in the castle here.

Agnes. Will you now take them?

Giovanna. If some miracle
Might turn a jewel to a grain of corn,
I would: my own were kneaded into bread
In the first days of our captivity.

Agnes. And mine were still withholden! Pardon me,
Just Heaven!

Giovanna. In words like those invoke not Heaven.
If we say *just*, what can we hope? but what
May we not hope if we say *merciful*?

Agnes. And yet my fault is very pardonable.
We, at our time of life, want these adornments.

Giovanna. We never want them. Youth has all its own;
None can shed lustre upon closing days,
Mockers of eyes and lips and whatsoever
Was prized; nor can they turn one grey hair brown,
But, skilfully transmuted, might prolong
The life and health and happiness of hundreds.

Agnes. Queens may talk so.

Giovanna. Not safely, but to friends.

Agnes. With power and pomp . . .

Giovanna. Behold my pomp, my power!
These naked walls, cold pavement, grated windows.

Agnes. Let me share these with you. Take all my jewels.

Giovanna. Forbear, forbear, dear Agnes!

Agnes.

Earth then, take them!
[*Throwing them from her.*]

SCENE III. CASTEL-NUOVO.

DURAZZO. RUPERT. GIOVANNA. AGNES.

Durazzo. Upon my knees I do entreat of you
To hear me. In sincerity, the crown
(Now mine) was forced upon me.

Giovanna. Carlo! Carlo!
Know you what crowns are made of?

Durazzo (rising). I must wear one,
However fitly or unfitly made.

Giovanna. The ermine is outside, the metal burns
Into the brain.

Durazzo. Its duties, its conditions,
Are not unknown to me, nor its sad cares.

Giovanna. 'Tis well Maria my sweet sister lives not
To see this day.

Durazzo. But Margarita lives,
Her beauteous daughter, my beloved wife.
She thinks you very kind who let her go
And join me, when strange rumours flew abroad
And liars call'd me traitor.

Giovanna. With my blessing
She went, nor heard (I hope) that hateful name.

Durazzo (negligently). My cousin Agnes! not one word from
you?

Agnes. Charles of Durazzo! God abandons thee
To thy own will: can any gulph lie lower!

Durazzo. 'Twas not my will.

Agnes.

No!

Durazzo.

What I did, I did

To satisfy the people.

Agnes.

Satisfy

Ocean and Fire.

Durazzo.

The Church too.

Agnes.

Fire and Ocean

Shall lie together, and shall both pant gorged,
Before the Church be satisfied, if Church
Be that proud purple shapeless thing we see.

Durazzo (to Rupert). Show the pope's charter of investi-
ture.

Rupert. 'Tis this. May it please our lady that I read it.

Giovanna (to Durazzo). Reasons where there are wrongs but
make them heavier.

Durazzo (to Agnes). When the whole nation cries in agony
Against the sway of Germans, should I halt?

Agnes. No German rules this country; one defends
And comforts and adorns it: may he long!
The bravest of his race, the most humane.

Durazzo. Quell'd, fugitive, nor Germany nor France
Afford him aid against us.

Giovanna.

Sir! he hoped

No aid from France.

Agnes.

Does any? What is France?

One flaring lie, reddening the face of Europe.

Durazzo. French is Provenza.

Agnes.

There our arts prevail,

Our race : no lair of tigers is Provenza.

I call that France where mind and soul are French.

Durazzo. Sooner would he have graspt at German arms.

Giovanna. God hold them both from Italy for ever!

Durazzo. She shall want neither. The religious call Blessings upon us in long-drawn processions.

Agnes. Who are the men you please to call religious?

Sword-cutlers to all Majesties on earth,

Drums at the door of every theatre

Where tragedies are acted : that friar knows it.

Rupert. Such is the fruit of letters sown in courts!

Peaches with nettle leaves and thistle crowns!

Upon my faith! kings are unsafe near them.

Durazzo (to Agnes). May-be we scarcely have your sanction, lady?

Am I one?

Agnes. No.

Durazzo. What am I?

Agnes.

What! an ingrate.

Durazzo (scoffingly). Is that to be no king? You may rave on, Fair cousin Agnes: she who might complain

Absolves me.

Agnes. Does the child she fed? the orphan?

The outcast? does he, can he, to himself,

And before us?

Durazzo. I, the king, need it not.

Agnes. All other blind men know that they are blind, All other helpless feel their helplessness.

SCENE IV. UNDER CASTEL-NUOVO.

DURAZZO and RUPERT.

Rupert. Remarkt you not how pale she turn'd?

Durazzo.

At what?

Rupert. I said kings were unsafe. She knew my meaning.

Durazzo. No man alive believes it: none believed it, Beside the vulgar, when Andrea died.

Rupert. Murdered he was.

Durazzo. Mysteriously. Some say . .

Rupert. What do some say?

Durazzo.

I never heeded them.

I know thee faithful: in this whole affair

I've proved it. He who goes on looking back

Is apt to trip and tumble.

[Goes.

Rupert (alone).

Why this hatred?

Are there no memories of her far more pleasant?

I saw her in her childish days : I saw her
 When she had cast away her toys, and sate
 Sighing in idleness, and wishing more
 To fall into her lap ; but what ? and how ?
 I saw her in the gardens, still a child,
 So young, she mockt the ladies of the court,
 And threw the gravel at them from her slipper,
 And ran without if they pursued, but stopt
 And leapt to kiss the face of an old statue
 Because it smiled upon her : then would she
 Shudder at two wrens fighting, shout, and part them.
 Next came that age (the lovely seldom pass it)
 When books lie open, or, in spite of pressing,
 Will open of themselves at some one place.
 Lastly, I saw her when the bridal crown
 Entwined the regal. Oh ! that ne'er these eyes
 Had seen it ! then, Andrea ! thou had'st lived,
 My comfort, my support. Divided power
 Ill could I brook ; how then, how tolerate
 Its rude uprooting from the breast that rear'd it !
 And must I now sweep from me the last blossoms
 That lie and wither in the walk of life ?
 Fancies ! . . . mere fancies ! . . . let me cease to waver.
 Who would not do as I did ? I am more
 A man than others, therefore I dare more,
 And suffer more. Such is humanity :
 I can not halve it. Superficial men
 Have no absorbing passions : shallow seas
 Are void of whirlpools. I must on, tho' loath.

SCENE V. PALACE-GARDEN.

MAXIMIN and AGATHA.

Maximin. Courage ! or start and leave me. Sobs indeed !
 Pack those up for young girls who want some comfits.
 Nay, by my soul, to see grown women sob it, .
 As thou dost, even wert thou not my sister,
 Smites on me here and whets my sword at once.
 It maddens me with choler . . . for what else
 Can shake me so ? I feel my eyes on fire.
 He shall pay dear for it, the cursed Frate.
Agatha. Why, Maximin, O why didst thou consent
 To meet the friar again ?

Maximin. To make him serve thee.

Agatha. Poverty rather ! want . . . even infamy.

Maximin. Did'st thou not pity, would'st not serve, the queen ?

Agatha. O might I ! might I ! she alone on earth
Is wretchered : my soul shall ever bend
Before that sacredest supremacy.

Maximin. Come with me : we will talk about the means.

Agatha. But, be thou calm.

Maximin. A lamb.

He little thinks [*Aside.*
To see the lamb turn round and bite the butcher.

Agatha ! Agatha ! while I repeat
Thy name again, freshness breathes over me.
What is there like it ? Why, 'tis like sweet hay
To rest upon after a twelve hours' march,
Clover, with all its flowers, an arm's length deep.

SCENE VI. NAPLES. PALACE OF BUTELLO.

BUTELLO and RUPERT.

Butello (reads). " We, Urban, by the grace of God . . . "

Rupert. Well, well ;
That is all phrase and froth ; dip in the spoon
A little deeper ; we shall come at last
To the sweet solids and the racy wine.

Butello. Patience, good Frate, patience !

Rupert. Now, Butello,
If I cried *patience*, wouldst not thou believe
I meant *delay* ? So do not cry it then.
Read on . . about the middle. That will do . .
Pass over *love, solicitude, grief, foresight,*
Paternal or avuncular. Push on . .
There . . thereabout.

Butello. Lift off thy finger, man,
And let me, in God's name, read what wants reading.

Rupert. Prythee be speedy . . Where thou seest my name . .

Butello (reads). " If that our well-beloved Frate Rupert
Shall, by his influence thereunto directed
By the blest saints above, and the good will
Which the said Frate Rupert ever bore us,
Before the expiration of one month,
So move the heart of Carlo of Durazzo
That the said Carlo do invade and seize . .

Rupert. What would his Holiness have next ?

Butello. Wait, wait.
" Naples, a kingdom held by our permission . .

Rupert. Ho! is that all? 'Tis done.

Butello. Hear me read on.

"From those who at this present rule the same . . .

Rupert. This present is already past. I've won.

Butello. "And shall consign a princely fief thereof, Hereditary, to our foresaid nephew Gieronimo Butello, We, by power Wherewith we are invested, will exalt Our trusty well-beloved Frate Rupert Unto the highest charge our Holy Church Bestows upon her faithful servitors."

Rupert. Would not one swear those words were all engrossed, And each particular letter stood bolt-upright, Captain'd with taller at the column-head? What marshall'd files! what goodly companies! And, to crown all, the grand heaven-sent commission Seal'd half-way over with green wax, and stiff With triple crown, and crucifix below it. Give me the paper.

Butello. Why?

Rupert (impatient). Give me the paper.

Butello. His Holiness hath signed it.

Rupert. Let me see.

Butello. Look.

Rupert. Nay but give it me.

Butello. A piece of paper!

Rupert. . . . Can not be worth a principality.

Butello (giving it). There then.

Rupert. What dukedom has the grandest sound?

Butello. Dukedom! the Pope says principality.

Rupert. Thou soon shalt blazon.

Butello. I rely on you:

Adieu, my lord!

Rupert. My prince, adieu! (*Alone.*) Who knows If this will better me! Away from court?

No; never. Leave the people? When he leaves it, The giant is uplifted off the earth

And loses all his strength. My foot must press it.

Durazzo, in things near, is shrewd and sighted:

I may not lead him. If I rule no more

This kingdom, yet ere long my tread may sound

Loud in the conclave, and my hand at last

Turn in their golden wards the keys of heaven.

SCENE VII. CASTLE OF MUBO.

GIOVANNA *and* AGATHA.

Giovanna. Both mind and body in their soundest state
Are always on the verge of a disorder,
And fear increases it : take courage then.

Agatha. There is an error in the labyrinth
Of woman's life whence never foot returns.

Giovanna. Hath God said that ?

Agatha.

⊙ lady ! man hath said it.

Giovanna. He built that labyrinth, he led that foot
Into it, and there left it. Shame upon him !
I take thee to my service and my trust.

To love the hateful with prone prudent will
Is worse than with fond unsuspectingness
To fall upon the bosom of the lovely,
The wise who value us, the good who teach us,
The generous who forgive us when we err.

Agatha. Oh ! I have no excuse.

Giovanna.

She stands absolved

Before her God who says it as thou sayst it.
I have few questions for thee : go, be happier.
I owe thy brother more than I can pay,
And would, when thou hast leisure, hear what chance
Rais'd up a friend where the ground seem'd so rough.

Agatha. Leave me no leisure, I beseech of you :
I would have cares and sorrows not my own
To cover mine from me : I would be questioned,
So please you, I may else be false in part,
Not being what eyes bedim'd with weeping see me.

Giovanna. You come, 'tis rumour'd here, from Hungary.
My infant was torn from me by his uncle
And carried into Hungary.

Agatha.

I saw it.

Giovanna. Saw it ! my infant ! to have seen my infant,
How blessed ! Was it beautiful ? strong ? smiling ?

Agatha. It had mild features and soft sunbright hair,
And seem'd quite happy.

Giovanna.

No, poor thing, it was not ;

It often wanted me, I know it did,
And sprang up in the night and cried for me,
As I for it . . . at the same hour, no doubt.
It soon soon wasted . . . And you saw my child !
I wish you would remember more about him . . .

The little he could say you must remember . . .
Repeat it me.

Agatha. Ah lady! he was gone,
And angels were the first that taught him speech.

Giovanna. Happier than angels ever were before!

Agatha. He happier too!

Giovanna. Ah! not without his mother!

Go, go, go . . . There are graves no time can close.

ACT III.

SCENE I. NAPLES. PALACE.

DURAZZO. RUPERT. HERALD. OFFICERS.

Durazzo. I thought I heard a trumpet. But we reel
After we step from shipboard, and hear trumpets
After we ride from battle. 'Twas one. Hark!
It sounds again. Who enters?

Officer.

Please your Highness!

A herald claims admittance.

Durazzo.

Let him in.

Rupert. Now for disguises; now for masks; steel, silk;
Nothing in these days does but maskery.
Pages talk, sing, ride with you, sleep beside you,
For years: behold-ye! some fine April-day
They spring forth into girls, with their own faces,
Tricks, tendernesses . . . ne'er a mark of saddle!

(HERALD enters.)

Bacco! this is not one of them, however!

Durazzo. Well, sir, your message.

Herald.

Herald from duke Otho,

I bring defiance and demand reply.

Durazzo. I know duke Otho's courage, and applaud
His wisdom. Tell duke Otho from king Carlo,
I would in his place do the very same:
But, having all I want, assure your lord
I am contented.

Rupert.

Blessed is content.

Durazzo. Now, should duke Otho ever catch the reins
(For all things upon earth are changeable)

He can not well refuse the turn he tries,
But will permit me to contend with him
For what at present I propose to keep.

Herald. If then your Highness should refuse the encounter,
Which never knight, and rarely king, refuses . .

Durazzo. Hold, sir! All kings are knights. The alternative?

Herald. None can there be where combat is declined.

He would not urge in words the queen's release,
But burns to win it from a recreant knight.

Durazzo. Did Otho say it?

Herald. Standing here his herald,

I have no voice but his.

Durazzo. You may have ears :

Hear me then, sir! You know, all know at Naples,
The wife and husband are as near at present
As ever, though the knight and lady not.

She, when she married him, declined his love,
And never had he hers : Taranto won it,
And, when he squandered it, 'twas unretrieved.

Herald. Is this, sir, for my ears or for my voice?

My voice (it is a man's) will not convey it.

Durazzo [*to guards*]. Escort the herald back with honours
due. [*To Rupert.*]

What think you, my lord bishop of Nocera ?

Rupert. Troublesome times ! troublesome times indeed !

My flock, my brethren at Nocera, will,
Must want me : but how leave my prince, a prey
To tearing factions, godless, kingless men !

Durazzo. Never mind me, good father !

Rupert. Mind not you ?

I can not go ; I would not for the world.

Durazzo. The world is of small worth to holy men.

Rupert. I will not hence until the storm be past.

Durazzo. After a storm the roads are heavier.

Courage ! my good lord bishop ! We must speed
And chaunt our *Veni Domine* at Nocera.

Rupert. Then would your Highness . .

Durazzo. Not corporally,

But, where my bishop is, I am in spirit. [*Goes.*]

Rupert (*alone*). So ! this is king . . and wit too ! *that's* not
kingly.

Can he be ignorant of who I am ?

They will show fragments of this sturdy frock,
Whence every thread starts visible, when all
The softer nappery, in its due descent,
Drops from the women, Carlo, to the moths.

SCENE II. APARTMENT IN THE CASTLE OF MURO.

MAXIMIN *and* AGATHA.

Maximin. How fares thy lady?

Agatha. As one fares who never
Must see the peopled earth, nor hear its voice
Nor know its sympathy; so fares Giovanna;
But, pure in spirit, rises o'er the racks
Whereof our world is only one vast chamber.

Maximin. Dost thou enjoy the gardens, fields, and forests?

Agatha. Perfectly.

Maximin. Hast a palfrey?

Agatha. Had I ever?
Reading and needlework employ the day.

Maximin. Ah! our good mother little knew what pests
Those needles and those books are, to bright eyes;
Rivals should recommend them, mothers no.
We will ride out together.

Agatha. On what horses?

Maximin. One brought me. Are the queen's at grass?

Agatha. We have none.

Maximin. Thou art hale, Agatha, but how enjoy
Perfectly, as thou sayest, these domains?

Agatha. By looking out at window with the queen.

Maximin. All the day thro'?

Agatha. I read to her: and then,
If she suspects it tires me, she takes up
The volume, and pretends great interest
Just there, and reads it out.

Maximin. True history?

Agatha. History she throws by.

Maximin. Then sweet-heart songs,
Adventures?

Agatha. Some she reads, and over some
Tosses her work, rises, and shuts the cover.

Maximin. I would not shut the song-book. There are others
That show within them gold-and-purple saints,
Heads under arm, eyes upon platter, laughing
At her who carries them and lately wore them.

Agatha. Such are not wanting.

Maximin. Pleasant sights enough!
I would fain see them.

Agatha. Quite impossible.

Maximin. On feast-days?

Agatha. All are in her bedroom-closet.

Maximin. So! the best books then must be out of sight,
As all the best things are! What are her pictures?

Agatha. Chiefly her own lost family, and those
She loved the most in it.

Maximin. O for a glimpse!
Tell me at least who are they.

Agatha. Good king Robert,
Whose face she often kisses.

Maximin. None more worth it?

Agatha. There are the two Marias: one elate
With merriment, her eyes orbs wing'd with flame;
Long deep and dark the other's, and within
Whose cooler fountains blissfully might bathe
A silenter and (haply) purer love.

Maximin. I should be glad to look at them, but rather
At the kind queen herself.

Agatha. That thou mayest do.

Maximin. When?

Agatha. Now; I think; for having heard who 'twas
That warned her of her danger when the duke
Rode in, she wist to thank thee. Come with me:
I must first enter and announce your name.

Maximin. I thought you said she knew it. Take your course.

SCENE III. CHAMBER AT MURO.

GIOVANNA. MAXIMIN. AGATHA.

Giovanna. Accept my too few thanks, sir, for your zeal . . .

Maximin. Fine air, my lady queen, in this high tower;
Healthy as Hungary; may you enjoy it
These many days!

Giovanna (bending). I fancied Hungary
Was moister, leveler, than hereabout.

Maximin. We have a plain in Hungary on which,
Just in the middle, all of Italy's
You shall pin down nor see them from the sides.
And then what cattle! horse, ox, sheep! God's blessing
Upon hard-working men, like furlough soldiers,
And rare sport at the foray, when the Turk
Might seize them if we sent them not to quarters.
Here too seems nothing wanting. [*Looking round.*]

Giovanna. A few friends
Were welcome, could they but return, whose pen
And conversation lighten'd former hours.

Maximin. Learned ones; ay?

Giovanna. The learned came around me.

Maximin. Whistle, and they are at the barley-corns,
 Wing over wing, beak against beak, I warrant.
 I knew two holy friars, as holy men
 As ever snored in sackcloth after sinning,
 And they were learned. What now was the upshot?
 I should have said one's crucifix was white,
 The other's black. They plied mild arguments
 In disputation. *Brother*, was the term
 At first, then *sir*, then nothing worse than *devil*.
 But those fair words, like all fair things, soon dropt.
 Fists were held up, grins in the face grew rife,
 Teeth (tho' in these one had the better of it
 By half a score) were closed like money-boxes
 Against the sinner damn'd for poverty.
 At last the learned and religious men
 Fell to it mainly, crucifix in hand,
 Until no splinter, ebony or linden,
 Was left, of bulk to make a toothpick of.

Agatha. Brother! such speech is here irreverent.

Giovanna. Let him speak on: we are not queens all day.
 Soldiers are rivals of the hierarchs,
 And prone to jealousy, as less at ease,
 Less wealthy, and, altho' the props of power,
 Less powerful and commanding.

Maximin. Never queen
 Spoke truer. I bear lusty hate to them.

Agatha. Again? O Maximin! before our princes
 We never hate nor love.

Maximin. Then, lady, I
 Am your worst vassal.

Giovanna. How?

Maximin. Being taught to hate you . . .
 God pardon me! None but the frockt could teach
 So false a creed. But now the heart let loose
 Swings quite the other way. Folks say they love
 Their princes: sure they must have wrong'd them first.
 I turned away mine eyes from your young beauty,
 And muttered to my beard, and made it quiver
 With my hard breathing of hard thoughts: but now
 Conspirators shall come in vain against you:
 Here is the sill they tread upon who enter. [*Striking his breast.*]

SCENE IV. RUPERT'S CLOISTER.

Rupert (alone). Fæalty sworn, should I retract so soon?
 I will live quiet . . . no more crimes for me . . .

When this is fairly over . . . for a crime
 It surely is . . . albeit much holier men
 Have done much worse and died in odour after.
 They were spare men, and had poor appetites,
 And wanted little sleep. 'Twont do with me.
 Beside, I must get over this bad habit
 Of talking to myself. One day or other
 Some fool may read me, mark me, and do hurt.
 And furthermore . . . when highest dignities
 Invest us, what is there to think about?
 What need for cleverness, wit, circumspection,
 Or harm to any . . . who keep still, submiss,
 And brush not in attempting to pass by.

SCENE V.

STEPHEN *enters*.

So, Stephen! we Hungarians are sent off.

Stephen. Your Reverence is made bishop, we hear say:
 As for us all . . .

Rupert. Lupins . . . when times are good.
 Ah! thou hast bowels; thou canst pity others.

Stephen. I can myself.

Rupert. I all my countrymen.
 I have been lately in that happy realm
 Our native land. [*Whispers*.

Her kings should govern here.

Stephen. And everywhere. What loyal subject doubts
 His prince's right over all other princes?

Rupert. Here are sad discontents. The prince Butello,
 Nephew of His Beatitude the Pope,
 Can not yet touch this principality.
 Durazzo, our sharp king, snatches it back,
 Altho' the kingdom was bestowed on him
 Under this compact.

Stephen. He will bring down bull
 And thunder on his crown. The pope's own nephew!

Rupert. No less a man.

Stephen. If there's pope's blood in him
 He won't stand robbery.

Rupert. We owe obedience
 To kings . . . unless a higher authority
 Dissolves it.

Stephen. Doubtless: but what kings? our own
 Say I.

Rupert. O Stephen! say it, say it softly.
 Few ears can open and can close like mine.

Stephen (aside). Ah! how good men all over are maligned!

Rupert. I would not trust another soul on earth . . .
But others must be trusted. Lucky they
Who first bring over to right ways the brave,
First climb the pole and strip the garland off
With all its gold about it. Then what shouts!
What hugs! what offers! dowers, in chests, in farms . . .
Ah! these are worldly things too fondly prized!
But there are what lie deeper; the true praise
Of loyalty, of sanctity.

Stephen (pondering). 'Tis pleasant
To look into warm chest with well-wrought hinges
That turn half-yearly. Pleasant too are farms
When harvest-moons hang over them, and wanes
Jolt in the iron-tinged rut, and the white ox
Is call'd by name, and patted ere pull'd on.

Rupert. These are all thine. I have lived many days
And never known that man unprosperous
Who served our holy church in high emprise.

Stephen. If so, I wish I could.

Rupert. Wish we had kings
Who keep their words like ours of Hungary.

Stephen. Just.

Rupert. I have half a mind to let Elizabeth
Know what a zealous subject, what a brave,
Her daughter has at Naples.

Stephen. Would she give me
(For thanks in these hard times are windy) money?
Think you?

Rupert. Don't squander all away. Few know
Its power, its privilege. It dubs the noble,
It raises from the dust the man as light,
It turns frowns into smiles, it makes the breath
Of sore decrepitude breathe fresh as morn
Into maternal ear and virgin breast.

Stephen. Is that all it can do? I see much farther.
I see full twenty hens upon the perch,
I see fat cheese moist as a charnel-house,
I see hogs' snouts under the door, I see
Flitches of bacon in the rack above.

Rupert. Rational sights! fair hopes! unguilty wishes!
I am resolved: I can refrain no longer:
Thou art the man for prince to rest upon,
The plain, sound, sensible, straitforward man,
No courtier . . . or not much of one . . . but fit
To show courts what they should be. Hide this letter.

Mind! if thou lovest it, or let'st an eye
 Glance on it, I may want the power again
 To serve thee: thou art ruin'd. The new king
 Might chide and chafe should Rupert ask another
 To forward any suit he would prefer
 For friend or kindred. Since thou must return
 To Hungary, thou shalt not go ill-fed.
 'Tis to the queen's confessor; look at it;
 Now put it up; now, godson of our Saint!
 Take this poor purse, and, honest soul! this blessing.
 Guides thou shalt have all the first day, and rules
 How to go forward on the road: so speed thee!

ACT IV.

SCENE I. CASTLE OF MURO.

GIOVANNA, AGATHA.

Giovanna. Long have we lived in one imprisonment;
 Our tears have darkened many a thread about
 Each distaff, at the whitening half-spent fire
 On winter-night; many a one when deep purple
 Cloath'd yonder mountain after summer-day,
 And one sole bird was singing, sad though free.
 Death, like all others, hath forgotten me,
 And grief, methinks, now growing old, grows lighter.

Agatha. To see you smile amid your grief, consoles me.

Giovanna. I never wanted confidence in you,
 Yet never have I opened my full mind,
 Keeping some thoughts secreted, altho' bent
 To draw them out before you. They have lain
 Like letters which, however long desired,
 We cover with the hand upon the table
 And dare not open.

Agatha. If relief there be,
 Why pause? if not, why blame your diffidence?

Giovanna. Fostered too fondly, I shot up too tall
 In happiness: it wasted soon. Taranto
 Had my first love; Andrea my first vow,
 And warm affection, which shuts out sometimes
 Love, rather than embraces it. To lose him
 Pained me, God knows! and worse (so lost!) than all
 The wild reports Hungarians spread about me.
 My first admirer was my first avenger.

He, laying at my feet his conquering sword,
 Withdrew. Two years elapst, he urged the dangers
 That still encompass me; recall'd our walks,
 Our studies, our reproofs for idling, smiled
 By (O kind man!) the grandfather of both.
 I bade him hope. Hope springs up at that word
 And disappears; Love, radiant Love, alights.
 Taranto was my joy; my heart was full:
 Alas! how little can the full heart spare?
 I paus'd . . . because I ill might utter it . . .
 In time he turn'd his fancies to another.
 Wretchedest of the wretched was I now;
 But gentle tones much comforted my anguish,
 Until they ended; then loud throbs confused
 The treasured words; then heavy sleep oppress me.
 I was ashamed . . . I *am* ashamed . . . yet (am I
 Unwomanly to own it?) when he loved
 One only, I was driven to despair;
 When more . . . *Adieu Taranto!* cried my heart
 And almost sank thro' sorrow into peace.
 O that fresh crimes in him should solace me!
 My life of love was over, when his spirit
 Flew from my lips, and carried my forgiveness
 On high, for Heaven's.

Wars burst forth again;
 He who defended me from their assaults
 Saw in me what to love, but whom to love
 He found not in me.

"If my confidence,
 My gratitude," said I, "suffice thee, Otho,
 Here is my hand."

He took it, and he wept.
 Brave man! and let me also weep for thee!
Agatha. Not beauteous youth enrobed in royal purple
 And bright with early hope, have moved you so.
Giovanna. Record not either; let me dwell on Otho;
 The thoughts of him sink deeper in my pillow;
 His valiant heart and true one bleeds for me.

SCENE II. COURT-YARD OF MURO.

MAXIMIN and STEPHEN.

Stephen. Maximin! art thou close?
Maximin. Yea, close enough,
 Altho' I have the whole court-yard to cool in.

Stephen. I meant not that.

Maximin. A baton to a pike
Thou didst not; else thou hadst not spoken it.

Stephen. Some folks think better of my understanding.

Maximin. None of thy heart: give me thy fist then, Stephen.

Stephen. That sets all right.

Maximin. What brought thee hither?

Stephen. What?

Maximin. Hast secrets?

Stephen. None worth knowing.

Maximin. No man has:

They never did any one good.

Stephen. They may.

Maximin! hast commands for Hungary?

Maximin. For Hungary?

Stephen. What! is there no such place?

Maximin. No, by my soul! nor ever will for me.

Were not my sister here about her duty,
I could knock out my brains against the wall
To think of Hungary.

Stephen. Yet thou hast there
No croft, no homestead, pullet, chick.

Maximin. Hast thou?

Stephen. I am a man at last. Wert thou but one!

Maximin. Stephen, we will not quarrel.

Stephen. I am rich

I meant to say.

Maximin. So far so well: however,
Not some bold thief who stands some ages back
(Tho' better there than nearer) nor some bolder
Who twists God's word and overturns his scales,
Nor steel, nor soil in any quantity,
Nor gold, whose chain encompasses the globe,
Nor even courage, Stephen, is sufficient
To make a man: one breath on Woman's wrongs,
Lifting the heart, does that.

Stephen. And other things.

Maximin. Chick, pullet, homestead, croft; are these our
makers?

Stephen. I have them in this lining, one and all.

Maximin (*suspecting*). Stephen! I could show thee the
duplicate

In the same hand. He who fixt me at Muro
Will fix thee too in some such place as firmly.
What! hast no heart for castles? art low-minded?
How! with chick, pullet, homestead, croft? Sit down:

Thou didst not sweat so after all thy walk
As thou dost now. What ails thee, man ?

Stephen. What ails me !

Nothing.

Maximin. But did Fra Rupert, did he truly
Clap thee up here ? Cleverly done ! Don't blame him.

Stephen. Blame him ! if friar he were not, and moreover
The tadpole of a bishop, by the martyr !

I would run back and grapple with his weazon.

Maximin. He is too cunning for us simple men.

Stephen. For thee, it seems, he has been . . . but for me,
I, man or child, was never yet out-witted.

Maximin. Ah ! we all think so ; yet all are, by weaker.

And now about the letter.

Stephen. Thee he trusted ;

I know he did ; show me the duplicate.

Maximin. Duplicates are not written first nor shown first.
How many men art good against ?

Stephen. One only.

Maximin. Then five might overmaster thee and gag thee,
And five are ready in the Apennines ;

If I knew where exactly, I would tell thee.

Stephen. A fiend of hell in frock !

Maximin. No, not so bad :

He, without blame or danger on thy part,

Shall build thy fortune.

Stephen. He ? I scorn the thief . . .

Beside . . . he would not.

Maximin. Would or not, he shall.

[*STEPHEN hesitates.*]

Am I an honest man ?

Stephen. Why ! as men go.

Maximin. Give me the letter then, and, on my life,
It shall do more and better for thee much

Than placed in any other hands but mine.

[*An Officer passes.*]

Ho ! Captain ! see an honest man at last,

[*Giving him the letter.*]

And you the very one he came about.

Stephen (threatening MAXIMIN). Traitor !

Maximin. A traitor, with a vengeance, is he.

Stephen. Hangman !

Maximin. Thou needst not call him ; he will come
Presently. [*To the Officer.*]

This poor hind hath saved the prince

From insurrection, from invasion. Read.

[*Officer reads.*]

The royal favour will shine warm upon
One friend of mine.

Officer. Be sure : he will be made.
'Tis but our service . . . We must not complain . . .
Tho' there are things, of late, which soldiers' crops
Swell high against. We captains . . .

Maximin. Ay, we captains ! . . .

Officer. I must be gone to Naples ; so must thou
My gallant grey-coat. [*Goes out.*

Maximin. Tell me how thou camest
To Muro, of all places in the world,
It lies so wide of any road to Hungary.

Stephen. Fra Rupert bade me follow at mid-day
A band of holy mendicants, due-south,
To baffle all suspicion : the next morn
To cross the mountains on my left, and turn
Northward, and then take boat by Pesaro.
While they were stretcht along the levellest tiles
In the best chamber . . . being mendicants . . .
Each on his sheepskin . . . for they love soft lying . . .
Of grand farm-house ; and while nighthawk and grillo
Fought for it which should sing them first to sleep ;
And while aside them, in brass pot unfathom'd,
The rich goat-whey was ripening for next breakfast,
I thought of my far sheep and my near friend ;
My near friend first ; and so, by luck, here am I.

Maximin. But how didst dream that thou shouldst find me
here ?

Stephen. Who, in the Virgin's name, should first step up,
After I bade the mendicants good-bye,
Who but Augustin ! Much about our country,
Mops, wakes, fairs, may-poles, gipsy-girls, and fortunes,
When suddenly, as one that knew them all,
He whisper'd thou wert at this Muro here,
Some twenty miles, or near upon it, off.
I must fain see thee. After three hours' walk
I ask the distance : twenty-five miles scant.
At night I supt and slept with an old shepherd :
His dog soon crope betwixt us, so genteely,
I should have never known it, but his nose
Was cold against my ear, and, when I turn'd,
A snag or two was at it . . . without harm.
Morning blew sharp upon us from the hills.
" How far are we from Muro, my good man ? "
Said I, and dipt my olive in the salt.
" Scant thirty miles." Let never man believe

In luck! I overturned the salt, alert
To hurry on; yet here thou seest me, rich . . .
Sleeping six hours in winter, five in summer.

Maximin (pondering). Augustin told thee I was here!
Augustin!

How should he know? One only knew beside
The friar: he never would have told: she told him.

[*Walks about impatiently.*]

Augustin has smooth locks and fresh complexion,
And heels for dance and voice for dulcimer,
Rare articles at finding secrets out:
But, with thy slanting face, and arm curl'd round
The inside canework of a padded chair,
And leg oblique slid negligently under,
If thou wouldst keep them nicely in repair
Ferret no more my secrets out, Augustin!

Officer (returned). Ready? my dapple grey! ready for Naples?

Stephen. Not without Maximin. By his advice
I call'd you in to help us: he shall have
His share.

Maximin. When our blythe king sniffs up the wind,
And sees the clouds roll mainly from the north,
And finds Giovanna's enemies advance,
He may be kinder to her: so, commander,
If you believe I did my duty now,
Let me confirm the letter you convey.

Officer. Canst thou add aught?

Maximin. Much, were there much required.

Officer. Come then along: we will drink gold to-morrow.

SCENE III. MONASTERY GARDENS.

Rupert (alone). I must have peace: I can not live without it:
Only few years (who knows) may yet remain.
They shall not hurt the queen: in part the harm
Would be my doing. But then Maximin . . .
He too . . . yet why not let him die in battle?
Battles there will be: kings are all tenacious
Of their king-life: Italians are astute,
Hungarians valiant: two stout swords must clash
Before one break.

That Agatha, that Agatha
Troubles me most of all! Suppose she comes
Into my very palace at Nocera,
And tells the people what the bishop did!
Never was blow cruel like this since Herod.

Giovanna must then live, if for her sake
Alone; for such her tenderness, her truth,
She'll not abandon her while life remains.

SCENE IV. PALACE IN NAPLES.

DURAZZO. CHANCELLOR. PRIVY-COUNSELLORS.

Durazzo. Speak, my lord chancellor: you now have read
The letter through: can doubt remain upon it?

[CHANCELLOR *shakes his head.*
Gentlemen! you have heard it: what think you?

First Counsellor. Traitorous, if there be treason.

Second Counsellor. Sentence then.

Chancellor. Powerful is Rupert: many think him saintly,
All know him wise and wary: he has friends
In every house, and most among the women.
Such men are dangerous to impeach: beside,
Being now bishop . . .

Durazzo. Not quite yet: appointed,
Not seated.

Chancellor. No? This changes the whole aspect.
Once bearing that high dignity, once throned . . .

Durazzo. I like no thrones that narrow mine too much,
And wonder wherefore clergymen should mount them.

Chancellor. However, sir, since such hath been the custom
From barbarous times . . .

Durazzo. Till times herein as barbarous . . .

Chancellor. . . . We must observe the usage of the realm,
And keep our hands from touching things held sacred.
Few days ago, for lighter crimes the friar
Might have been punished with severity.

First Counsellor. Even now, although his legs begin to sprout
With scarlet plumage, we may crop his crest;
But better on the beam than in the yard.

Third Counsellor. It would put by much bickering.

Fourth Counsellor. There are many
Expectants, holy men, who would condemn
In any court ecclesiastical
Appeal so manifest to foreign force,
And strip him to the skin to wash him clean.

Fifth Counsellor. And there are civil laws which tread on
velvet
And leave no scandal when they pass the door;
Modest and mild and beautifully drest,
And void of all loquacity, all pomp;

They, should you ask them what they are, reply
 "We are not laws; we are prerogatives."

Carlo. Paoluccio! wit may give the best advice.
 Far be from me all violence. If the criminal
 Be strong and boisterous, the ecclesiastical
 Craving and crafty, swift or slow at pleasure,
 At least our civil laws are excellent,
 And what you call prerogatives are civil.

Paoluccio. I class them so.

Many at once.

They are the best of all.

Carlo. I will pursue this counsel.

You may rise.

ACT V.

SCENE I. CASTLE OF MURO.

GIOVANNA. AGATHA. OTHO. Officers.

Giovanna. What shouts are those? whose voice, above them
 all,

Above the neighing horse and trumpet's clang,
 Calls to the rescue? Can I doubt? . . .

My Otho!

My Otho! rush not rashly into fight:

Thou canst not free me.

Agatha.

He has beat them off . . .

He enters.

Officer. Yes, he enters.

Otho (wounded mortally). Take the ransom . . .

'Tis small . . . 'tis only one worn life . . . and loose her.

Giovanna. Not from thy neck, my Otho, while thou livest,
 Or while I live.

Otho. Giovanna hath embraced me . . .

I now have lived . . . life should be over now.

Officer. His breath is gone: bear him away: the king

[*Points to the QUEEN, who swoons.*]

May have commands for her.

Agatha.

My queen! my queen!

My friend! my comforter! Oh! *that* no more.

[*Falls.*]

SCENE II. PALACE, NAPLES.

MARGARITA. DURAZZO.

Margarita. I can not see what mighty things indeed
 My aunt Giovanna ever did for me:
 Can you?

Durazzo. They long are over, if she did.
Margarita. Beside . . .
Durazzo. Now what beside?
Margarita. I had almost
 Said such a foolish thing!
Durazzo. You! *Margarita!*
Margarita. I was about to say she did no more
 For me than you. If she loved *me*, she loved me
 Because she loved my mother, her own sister;
 Where is the wonder? where the merit?
Durazzo. None.
Margarita. She even loved another sister, her
 Whom people call'd *Fiammetta*; God knows why;
 No Christian name, nought Christian-like about it.
 She was the one of Sicily, who fancied
 (O shame upon her!) somebody . . . a writer.
Durazzo. What writer?
Margarita. Is not that enough? a writer!
Durazzo. There is not much to thank her for, if all
 Partake of her affection, even those
 Who sink so low.
Margarita. She played with *you* the most;
 Perhaps because she thought you like her child.
 She did show pleasure when she fondled *me*;
 But 'twas not to make *me* the happier,
 Although it did so, but herself . . . herself.
 Yet, Carlo, would you think it! there are times
 When I am ready to desire of you
 That you would let her out of such a den
 At Muro.
Durazzo. Had you mentioned it before,
 As wishing it . . . why, then indeed . . .
Margarita. So, then,
 You would have let her out? How very kind!
Durazzo. If we could have persuaded her to go.
Margarita. Persuaded her? what! out of prison?
Durazzo. Do not
 Term it so harshly: who can bear to hear
 Of prisons?
Margarita. Is the tower indeed not lockt
 Nor bolted?
Durazzo. People would run into it
 And trouble her devotions. At this time
 She needs them most particularly.
Margarita. Why?
Durazzo. Her health declines.

Margarita. Is she in danger?
Durazzo. Some.
Margarita. Imminent?
Durazzo. There are fears.
Margarita. About her life?
Durazzo. Men shake their heads.
Margarita. O Carlo! O my Carlo!
 I have . . . (will God forgive me?) been ungrateful.
 And all this time! . . . when, but one moment of it . . .
 My hand in hers, or hers upon my head . . .
Durazzo. Hush! Margarita! thou'rt a queen: be calm,
 And worthy of the station we enjoy. [*He leads her out.*]

SCENE III. PALACE, NAPLES.

HIGH STEWARD. CHAMBERLAIN. CHANCELLOR. DURAZZO.

Chamberlain. Wary and slow is this our chancellor,
 Where title-deeds are fluttering in suspense;
 The perill'd life and honour of his queen
 He passes as he would a wretch in chains
 On the road-side, saying, *So! there thou art!*

Lord High Steward. We want such men's religion, their
 sound sense,
 Coolness, deliberation, ponderous front,
 Broad and dark eyebrow. Much of dignity,
 Reverence and awe, build on these crags alone.

Lord Chamberlain. Ye have them all in one. I hear his foot:
 The king steps lighter: both advance.

Lord High Steward. Who come
 Behind? for there are many.

(DURAZZO, CHANCELLOR, COUNSELLORS, *enter.*)

Durazzo. Take your seats.
 Gentlemen! ye have heard with indignation
 The rash attempt against my peace and yours,
 Made by the Suabian, husband of Giovanna.

Lord Chamberlain. We hear, by Heaven's protection of your
 Highness,
 It fail'd.

Lord High Steward. And that he fell in the attempt.

Durazzo. Desperate, he cut his way, tho' wounded, thro'
 My bravest troops, but could not force the gate;
 Horsemen are weak at walls nine fathoms high;
 He had scarce twenty with him.

Chancellor. There he paid
His forfeit life, declared already traitor.
Durazzo. On this we are not met, but to deliberate
On the state's safety. My lord chancellor,
Is the queen guilty?
Chancellor (starts). We must try her first,
Privately; then decide.
Durazzo. Yea, privately;
So pleaseth me. Take then your secretaries
And question her; decorously, humanely.

SCENE IV. CASTLE OF MURO.

GIOVANNA. CHANCELLOR. HIGH STEWARD. CHAMBERLAIN.
SECRETARIES.

Chancellor. Lady! we have heard all, and only ask
(For the realm's weal) your Highness will vouchsafe
To sign this parchment.

Giovanna (taking it). What contains it?

Chancellor. Peace.

Giovanna. I then would sign it with my blood; but blood
Running from royal veins never sign'd peace. [*R. ads.*]
It seems I am required to abdicate
In favour of Duke Carlo of Durazzo.

Chancellor. Even so.

Giovanna (to the others). To you I turn me, gentlemen!
If ever you are told that I admitted
His unjust claims, if ever you behold
Sign'd, as you fancy, by my hand the parchment
That waives our kingdom from its rightful heir,
Believe it not: only believe these tears,
Of which no false one ever fell from me
Among the many 'twas my fate to shed.
I want not yours; they come too late, my friends;
Farewell, then! You may live and serve your country;
These walls are mine, and nothing now beyond.

SCENE V. NAPLES.

MAXIMIN. STEPHEN.

Maximin. Among the idle and the fortunate
Never drops one but catafalc and canopy
Are ready for him: organ raves above,
And songsters wring their hands and push dull rhymes

Into dull ears that worse than wax hath stopt,
And cherubs puff their cheeks and cry half-split
With striding so across his monument.
Name me one honest man for whom such plays
Were ever acted.

They will ne'er lay Otho
With kindred clay! no helm, no boot beside
His hurried bier! no stamp of stately soldier
Angry with grief and swearing hot revenge,
Until even the paid priest turns round and winks.
I will away: sick, weary . .

(STEPHEN enters.)

Stephen. Hast thou heard
The saddest thing?

Maximin. Heard it? . . committed it,
Say rather. But for thee and thy curst gold,
Which, like magician's, turns to dust, I trow,
I had received him in the gate, and brought
The treasure of his soul before his eyes:
He had not closed them so.

Stephen. Worst of it all
Is the queen's death.

Maximin. The queen's?

Stephen. They stifled her
With her own pillow.

Maximin. Who says that?

Stephen. The man
Runs wild who did it, through the streets, and howls it,
Then imitates her voice, and softly sobs
"Lay me in Santa Chiara."

SCENE VI. NAPLES. BEFORE THE PALACE. AMONG GUARDS.

MAXIMIN. DURAZZO.

Maximin. Gallant prince!
Conqueror of more than men, of more than heroes!
What may that soldier merit who deserts
His post, and lets the enemy to the tent?

Durazzo. Death is the sentence.

Maximin. Sign that sentence then.
I shall be found beside a new-made grave
In Santa Chiara.

Durazzo. Art thou mad?

Maximin. I shall be
If you delay.
Durazzo (to Guards). See this man into Hungary.

SCENE VII. NAPLES. MONASTERY GARDEN.

Rupert (alone). There are some pleasures serious men sigh over,
And there are others maniacs hug in chains :
I wonder what they are : I would exchange
All mine for either, all that e'er were mine.
I have been sadly treated my whole life,
Cruelly slighted, shamefully maligned :
And this too will be laid upon my shoulders.
If men are witty, all the wit of others
Bespangles them ; if criminal, all crimes
Are shoveled to their doors.

God knows how truly
I wisht her life ; not her imprisonment
More truly. *Maximin and Agatha*
In the queen's life would never have come forth.

Men of late years have handled me so roughly,
I am become less gentle than I was.
Derision, scoffs and scorns, must be rebuff,
Or we can do no good in act or counsel.
Respect is needful, is our air, our day,
'Tis in the sight of men we see ourselves,
Without it we are dark and halt and speechless.
Religion in respect and power hath being,
And perishes without them. Power I hold :
Why shun men's looks ? why my own thoughts . . afraid ?
No, I am not afraid : but phantasies
Long dwelt on let us thro'.

If I do quail,
'Tis not the mind, the spirit ; 'tis the body.

A Monk (entering). Father I come from Muro, where a woman
(Sickly before) for days refused all food,
And now is dead.

Rupert. What is her name ?

Monk. One Agatha.

Rupert. Did she receive the holy Sacrament ?

Monk. You must have known she did, else why such joy ?
She would receive nought else.

Rupert. Then she is safe.

Monk. We trust in God she is : yet she herself
Had pious doubt.

Rupert. Of what was her discourse ?

Monk. Her mind, ere she departed, wandered from her.

Rupert. What did she talk about? dost hear?

Monk. She said,

“Rupert, if he could see me, might be” . . .

Rupert. What?

Monk. Her mind, observe, was wandering.

Rupert. Thine is too.

Tell me the very word she uttered.

Monk. “Saved.”

Blessings upon her! your uplifted hands
And radiant brow announce her present bliss.

Rupert. Said she no more?

Monk. “Since he’s not here, take these,
And let the friar and his brotherhood
Say masses for my soul: it may do good
To theirs no less.”

I stoopt the holy taper,
And through her fingers and her palm could see
That she held something: she had given it
But it dropt out of them: this crucifix,
From which the square-set jewels were removed,
And this broad golden piece, with its long chain
Of soft dark hair, like our late queen Giovanna’s.

Rupert. Her medal . . . *anno primo* . . . All goes right.

Monk. Your blessing!

Rupert. Take it, pr’ythee, and begone. [*Monk goes.*
Nothing has hurt me: none have seen me. None?
Ye saints of heaven! hath ever prayer been miss’d?
Penance, tho’ hard, been ever unperform’d?
Why do ye then abandon me? like one
Whom in your wrath ye hurl aside; like one
Scathed by those lightnings which God’s sleepless eye
Smites earth with, and which devils underneath,
Feeling it in the abysses of the abyss,
Rejoice was not for them.

Repent I did . . .

Even of Agatha I did repent.
I did repent the noble friends had fallen.
Could they not have been wiser, and escaped,
By curbing evil passions, pride, distrust,
Defiance? It was wrong in them: in me
’Twas not quite well: ’twas harsh, ’twas merciless:
Andrea had not done it: wrong’d, betray’d,
Andrea had not done it.

Have my words
Sorcery in them? do they wake the dead?

Hide thy pale face, dear boy! hide from my sight
 Those two dark drops that stain thy scanty beard,
 Hide those two eyes that start so! Curse me, kill me;
 'Twere mercy, 'twere compassion, not revenge;
 Justice, the echo of God's voice, cries *More!*
 I can endure all else.

I will arise,
 Push off this rack that rends me, rush before him
 And ask him why he made me what I am.

(*Enter Officers.*)

First Officer. Traitor! the king hath traced all thy devices.

Rupert. Without them he had ne'er been what ye style him.

Second Officer. Avowest thou thy perfidy?

Rupert. And his.

Third Officer. Murderer! thou shalt confess.

Rupert. 'Twere royal bounty.

Third Officer. And die.

Rupert. 'Twere more than royal.

First Officer. Come thy way.

Rupert. My way? my way? . . . I've travell'd it enough,
 With or without thee I will take another.

Second Officer. Whither!

Rupert (points to the window). Look yonder!
 There it lies. [Stabs himself.

Andrea!

First Officer (after a pause). Merciful God! end thus his
 many crimes?

Third Officer (after a pause). What moans and piteous wail-
 ings from the street!

Second Officer. Can they arise for him so suddenly?

First Officer. There are too many. None hath told the deed
 Beyond this spot, none seen it.

Third Officer. Now you hear
 Distinctly; if distinctly may be heard
 The wail of thousands.

Second Officer. Their queen's name they cry . . .

Third Officer. With blessings.

First Officer. Now, at last, ye know Giovanna;
 And now will Rupert too be known, tho' late.

THE SIEGE OF ANCONA.

No event in the history of Italy, including the Roman, is at once so tragical and so glorious as the Siege of Ancona; nor shall we find at any period of it, two contemporary characters so admirable for disinterested valour and prompt humanity, as William degli Adelardi of Marchesella, and the Countess of Bertinoro. The names of those who sustained the siege are, for the most-part, forgotten: but Muratori has inserted in his imperishable work the narratives of contemporary and nearly contemporary authors; and Siamondi has rendered many of the facts more generally known.—*Hist. des Répub. Ital.*, tome xi. ch. i.

MALE CHARACTERS.

THE CONSUL OF ANCONA. THE ARCHBISHOP OF MENTZ. THE BISHOP OF ANCONA. ANTONIO STAMURA. FATHER JOHN. MINUZZI. COSTANZIO. CORRADO, brother of Costanzio. PAULUCCI, formerly Consul. MARCHESSELLA. HERALD, SENATORS, OFFICERS, PRIESTS, PEOPLE.

FEMALE CHARACTERS.

ERMINIA, the Consul's daughter. NINA, her companion. ANGELICA, mother of Antonio Stamura. MALASPINA. COUNTESS OF BERTINORO. MARCA, attendant on Erminia.

ACT I. SCENE I.

On the steps of the cathedral, commanding a view of the country. Many of all ages are leaving the church and looking at the approach of the Archbishop, just beyond the walls, descending the hill.

Erminia. Nina! see what our matin prayers have brought us.
O what a sight! The youth and maidens fly,
Some to the city, others up the hills,
With the fresh tale each for the one loved best.

Nina. They are afraid to meet so many horses;
I would not scud away so, were I there,
Would you?

Erminia. My dress would show the dust; or else . . .
I run to tell my father: go, tell yours.

SCENE II. CONSUL'S HOUSE.

CONSUL and ERMINIA.

Erminia. Father! why are not all the bells set ringing?

Consul. What should the bells be ringing for to-day?

Erminia. Such a procession comes along the road

As never was: some bishop at the head:
And what a horse is under him! and what
Beautiful boys . . . they really are but boys,
Dear father . . . hold the bridle on each side!
Scarlet and gold about their surplices,
And waving hair; not like church servitors,
But princes' sons. I would give all the world
To see their faces . . . not quite all the world . . .
For who would care about boys' faces, father?
Beside, they are too distant, very far.

Consul. Art thou gone wild, Erminia?

Erminia. Come and see.

Consul (*listening, and rising*). What means this tumult?

Senators enter.

Consul! we are lost.

Consul. How so?

First Senator. The archbishop comes, from Barbarossa,
Against the city.

Consul. What archbishop comes?

Second Senator. Of Mentz.

Consul. Then close the gates, and man the walls,
And hurl defiance on him. Bring my robe,
Erminia! I will question this proud prelate.
Gasparo, lift my armour from the wall
In readiness.

Officer. A herald, sir, claims entrance.

Herald enters.

Consul. What would your master with his perfidy?

Herald. My master is the emperor and king.

Consul. The more perfidious. Binds him not his oath
To succour Italy? Is slavery succour?
Tell the false priest thou comest from, that priest
Who took the name of *Christian* at the font,
'Twere well he held not in such mockery
The blessed one he bears it from. But wealth
And power put Wisdom's eyes out, lest she rule.

Herald. Sir Consul! if the archbishop never preaches,
Pray why should you? It ill becomes my office
To bandy words: mine is but to repeat

The words of others : and their words are these :

“ The people of Ancona must resign
Their lawless independence, and submit
To Frederic, our emperor and king.”

Consul. Brief is the speech ; and brief is the reply.

The people of Ancona will maintain
Their lawful independence, and submit
No tittle, sir, to emperor or king.

Herald. Is this the final answer ?

Consul. Lead him forth.

Officer (enters). Sir ! ere you hasten to the walls, look once
Toward the harbour.

Consul. Gracious Heaven ! What sails
Are those ? Venetian ?

Officer. Yes ; and they take soundings.

Consul. Venice against us ? Freedom's firstborn child,
After the deluge that drown'd Italy.

Alas ! the free are free but for themselves ;
They hate all others for it. The first murderer
(Their patron) slew his brother. Thus would they.

[To the Officer.

Merluccio ! hasten, man ! call back again
Our mariners to leave the battlements
And guard their sisters and their mothers here.

Officer. Mothers and sisters follow'd them, to bring
Munition up the towers.

Consul. Bid them return :
The beach is open : thither is my road
Until more hands arrive.

Messenger (enters). Sir ! they weigh down
Machines for storming.

Consul. Go thou, tell Campiglio
To intercept them, if he can, before
They join the Germans on the hills above.

Erminia. O father ! here are none beside ourselves :
And those few people hauling in the boats
Can help us little ; they are so afraid.

Consul. Think not they are afraid because they pull
The oars with desperate strength and dissonance :
Who knows if they have each his loaf at home,
Or smallest fish set by from yesterday ?
The weather has been rough ; there is a swell
From the Adriatic. Leave me now, Erminia !

Erminia. Alone, dear father ?

Consul (placing his hand on the head of ERMINIA).
He who watches over
The people, never is alone, my child !

Erminia (*running back*). Here come the men who were debarking.

MINUZZI and others.

Minuzzi. Hail,
Sir Consul! All our fears then were but vain?

Consul. So! you *did* fear?

Minuzzi. Ay did we. The Venetians
Ride in huge galleys; we ply boats for trade.
But since, Sir Consul, you expected them,
We are all safe. I did not much misgive
When one in gallant trim, a comely youth,
Outside the mole, but ready to slip in,
Beckon'd me from his boat, and gave me, smiling,
This letter, bidding me deliver it
Into no other hand beside the consul's,
And adding, "All will soon be well again."
I hope it may. But there was cause for doubt!
The galleys have cast anchor.

Consul. Sure enough
They join our enemies.

Minuzzi. How! One free state
Against another! Slaves fight slaves, and kings
Fight kings: so let them, till the last has bled:
But shall wise men (and wise above the wise,
And free above the free are the Venetians)
Devastate our joint patrimony . . . freedom?
I fear not him who falls from such a highth
Before he strikes me. At him! my brave boys!
At him! the recreant! We have borne too much
In seeing his attempt. Could not we cut
The cables?

Stamura. Rare, rare sport for us!

Consul. Stamura!
If wise Minuzzi deems it feasible,
Ye shall enjoy the pastime, while the wind
Sits in this quarter, blowing from due-east
Hard into port: else must ye to the walls,
To meet full twenty thousand, well approved
In arms the most-part, all athirst for plunder.

Minuzzi. Where are they posted?

Consul. At the battlements.

Minuzzi. Lads! we must lose no time.

Sailor. Now let us see
Whether we too may not be mischievous
As they could wish us, this fine April morn'.

Minuzzi. Each bring his hatchet. Off! and quickly back.
[*They go.*]

FATHER JOHN *enters.*

One word, sir Consul, ere we part, this one:
My wife sits nigh the old church porch, infirm
With many watchings; thro' much love for me,
True-hearted! should the waters wash me home,
Stiffen'd a little more than is convenient,
Let none displace her from that low stone seat.
Grant me my suit, unless I fail in duty.

Consul (presses his hand). And these are breasts despotic
power would crush!

[*MINUZZI going, meets FATHER JOHN, who had listened.*]

Father John. Talk ye of hatchets?

Consul. Father John! good day!

F. John. Yea, with God's blessing, we will make it so.

Consul. I want your counsel on a perilous move.

Father! you were a diver in time past.

F. John. And in time present may be one again.

Minuzzi. Ah! could you join us in our enterprise!

F. John. What is it?

Minuzzi. Why, to dive and cut the cables
Of yon Venetians dancing there so gaily,
And bowing in bright pennons to each other.

F. John. Is this the Doge's wedding-day with Adria?
No dame in Venice ever played him falsèr
Than she will do, and haply before night.
Ye spoke of hatchet! 'Twould but do poor work
Against a cable.

Stamura. We can hold our breath
A good while on such business.

Consul. Father John,

Could you devise some fitter instrument?

Minuzzi. Ah! what inventions have not priests devised!
We all of us are what we are thro' them.

F. John. I love this reverence, my grey boy! and aptly
Hast thou believed that Father John could frame
What will perform the work, else difficult.
I thought of Turks and Saracens, and flags
Bearing the crescent, not the winged lion,
When I prepared my double-handed sickle
To reap the hemp-field that lies under water.
I will dive too, and teach you on the way
How ye shall manage it. So fare you well,
Sir Consul!

[*To the Man.*]

We have all the day before us
And not long work (tho' rather hard) to do.

SCENE III.

CONSUL *and* ERMINIA.

Consul. Erminia! read this letter. Wait awhile . .
Repress thy curiosity . . First tell me,
Erminia! would'st thou form some great alliance?

Erminia. Yes, father! who would not?

Consul. I know that none
Hath won that little heart of thine at present.

Erminia. Many, many have won it, my dear father!
I never see one run across the street
To help a lame man up or guide a blind man
But *that* one wins it: never hear one speak
As all should speak of you, but up my arms
Fly ready to embrace him!

Consul. And when any
Says thou art beautiful, and says he loves thee,
What are they ready then for?

Erminia. Not to beat him
Certainly: but none ever said such things.
They look at me because I am your daughter,
And I am glad they look at me for that,
And always smile, tho' some look very grave.

Consul. Well now, Erminia, should his Holiness
The Pope have sent his nephew with this letter,
Would you receive him willingly?

Erminia. Most willingly.

Consul. Nay, that is scarcely maidenly, so soon.

Erminia. I would not if you disapprove of it.

Consul. I do suspect he came aboard the galleys.

Erminia. O then, the galleys are not enemies.

Consul. Not if thou givest him thy hand. What say'st thou?

Erminia. I never saw him.

Consul. But suppose him handsome.
Indeed I hear much of his comeliness.

Erminia. Is that enough?

Consul. And virtues.

Erminia. That alone

Is not enough, tho' very, very much.
He must be handsome too, he must be brave,
He must have seen me often, and must love me,
Before I love or think of him as lover:
For, father, you are not a king, you know,

Nor I a princess : so that all these qualities
(Unless you will it otherwise) are necessary.

Consul. Thou art grown thoughtful suddenly, and prudent.

Erminia. Do not such things require both thought and prudence?

Consul. In most they come but slowly ; and this ground
Is that where we most stumble on. The wise
Espouse the foolish ; and the fool bears off
From the top branch the guerdon of the wise :
Ay, the clear-sighted (in all other things)
Cast down their eyes and follow their own will,
Taking the hand of idiots. They well know
They shall repent, but find the road so pleasant
That leads into repentance.

Erminia. Ah, poor souls !
They must have lost their fathers : then what wonder
That they have lost their way !

Consul. Now, in few words,
Erminia, for time presses, let me tell thee,
The Pope will succour us against our foe
If I accept his nephew for a son.

Erminia. O father ! does that make our cause more righteous ?
Or more unrighteous theirs who persecute us ?

Consul. No, child : but wilt thou hear him ? Rank and riches
Will then be thine. Altho' not born a princess,
Thou wilt become one.

Erminia. I am more already ;
I am your daughter ; yours, whom not one voice
Raised over all, but thousands.

Consul. I resign
My station in few days.

Erminia. O stay in it
Until the enemy is beaten back,
That I may talk of it when I am old,
And, when I weep to think of you, may dry
My tears, and say, *My father then was Consul.*

Consul. The power may be prolonged until my death.

Erminia. O no : the laws forbid it : do they not ?

Consul. He who can make and unmake every law,
Divine and human, will uphold my state
So long, acknowledging his power supreme ;
And laying the city's keys before his feet.

Erminia. Hath he not Peter's ? What can he want more ?
O father ! think again ! I am a child
Almost, and have not yet had time enough
Quite to unlearn the lessons you enforced

By precept and example. Bear with me !
 I have made you unhappy many times,
 You never made me so until this hour :
 Bear with me, O my father !

Consul. To my arms,
 Erminia ! Thou hast read within my breast
 Thy lesson backward, not suspecting guile.
 Yes, I was guileful. I would try thy nature :
 I find it what is rarely found in woman,
 In man as rarely. The Venetian fleet
 Would side with us ; their towers, their catapults
 Would all be ours, and the Pope's nephew thine,
 Would but thy father place the power supreme
 Within his hands, becoming his vicegerent.
 I turn aside from fraud, and see how force
 May best be met, in parley with the German.

SCENE IV. THE ENCAMPMENT AND TENT OF THE ARCHBISHOP UNDER
 THE WALLS.

CONSUL and ARCHBISHOP.

Archbishop. I do presume from your habiliments
 You are the consul of this petty state.

Consul. I am.

Archbishop. You may be seated. Once again . .
 Will you surrender unconditionally ?

Consul. Nor unconditionally nor conditionally.

Archbishop. I sent for you to point where lies your duty.

Consul. It lies where I have left it, in the town.

Archbishop. You doubt my clemency.

Consul. Say rather 'honour.'

Archbishop. Doubt you a soldier's honour ?

Consul. Not a soldier's

But when the soldier and the priest unite,
 Well may I doubt it. Goats are harmless brutes ;
 Dragons may be avoided ; but when goat
 And dragon form one creature, we abhor
 The flames and coils of the fell chimæra.

Archbishop. And therefore you refused a conference
 Unless I pitch my tent beneath your walls,
 Within an arrow's shot, distributing
 Ten archers on each side ; ten mine, ten yours ?

Consul. No doctor of divinity in Paris
 Is cleverer at divining. Thus it stands.

Archbishop. Ill brook I such affronts.

Consul. Ill brook, perhaps,

Florence and Pisa their ambassadors
Invited to a conference on peace,
And cast in prison.

Archbishop. Thus we teach the proud
Their duty.

Consul. Let the lame man teach the lame
To walk, the blind man teach the blind to see.

Archbishop. Insolent! Unbecoming of my station
Were it to argue with a churl so rude.

Rise: look before you thro' the tent: what see you?

Consul. I see huge masses of green corn upheaved
Within a belt of palisades.

Archbishop. What else?

Consul. Sheep, oxen, horses, trampling them.

Archbishop. No more?

Consul. Other huge masses farther off are smoking,
Because their juices quench the faggot-fire.

Archbishop. And whence come these?

Consul. From yonder houseless fields,
Of crops, and even of boundaries, bereft.

Archbishop. Whose were they?

Consul. Whose? The church's, past a doubt:
It never takes what is not freely given.

Archbishop. Proud rebels! ye have brought upon your heads
This signal vengeance from offended Cæsar.

Consul. And must ten thousand starve because one man
Is wounded in that part which better men
Cut from them, as ill-sorted with our nature?

If Satan could have dropt it, he were saved.

Archbishop. What meanest thou? What cast they from
them?

Consul. Pride.

It clings round little breasts and masters them,
It drops from loftier, spurn'd and trodden down.

Is this, my lord archbishop, this your Eden?

Is this the sacrifice of grateful herbs

Ye offer to your Gods? And will the next

Be more acceptable? Burnt-offerings raised

In your high places, and fossed round with blood!

Archbishop. Blasphemer! I am here no priest; I come
Avenger of insulted majesty.

But, if thou mindest Holy Writ, mind this,

The plainest thing, and worthiest of remembrance: . .

Render to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, man!

Consul. God will do that for us. Nought owe we Cæsar
But what he sent us when he sent you hither,

To cut our rising wheat, our bleeding vines,
To burn our olives for your wild carousals . .

Archbishop. The only wood that will burn green : it blazes
Most beautifully, and no smell from it.
But you Anconites have poor olive grounds,
We shall want more by Sunday.

Consul. May the curse
Of God be on you!

Archbishop. We are not so impious :
It is on you : it were a sin to wish it.

Consul. Prince and archbishop ! there are woes that fall
Far short of curses, though sore chastisements ;
Prosperities there are that hit the mark,
And the clear-sighted see God's anger there.

Archbishop. Are we constrain'd to drag and vex the sea
And harrow up the barren rocks below
For noisome weeds ? Are household animals
Struck off the knee to furnish our repast ?

Consul. Better endure than cause men this endurance.

Archbishop. Clearly ye think so : we think otherwise.
'Tis better to chastise than be chastised,
To be the judge than be the criminal.

Consul. How oft, when crimes are high enough to strike
The front of Heaven, are those two characters
Blended in one !

Archbishop. I am not to be school'd
By insolence and audacity.

Consul. We are,
It seems : but fortitude and trust in God
Will triumph yet. Our conference is closed.

ACT II.

SCENE I. AT THE RAMPARTS.

ANGELICA, STAMURA, and Soldiers.

Angelica. See ye those towers that stride against the walls ?

Soldier. See you this arrow ? Few were not more fatal
That flew from them : but this arrests my arm
Perhaps beyond to-morrow.

Angelica (to others). Fight amain.

Soldier. The widow of Stamura is below,
And, slender tho' her figure, fair her face,
Brave as her husband. Few her words : beware
Of falling back, lest they increase and shame us.

Another Soldier. Long live Stamura! She hath crost already
The sallyport.

Another Soldier. What held she in her hand?

Another Soldier. A distaff.

Soldier. Hush! what cries are those?

Another Soldier. All German.

Soldier. What dust is over-head?

Another Soldier. Is not it smoke?

Hurrah! flames mount above the battlements.

Soldier. It was her deed.

Another Soldier. But whose those cries behind us,
Along the harbour?

Soldier. Those all are Italian.

Another Soldier. Look! How yon tower curls outward, red
and reeling!

Soldier. Ay; it leans forward as in mortal pain.

Another Soldier. What are those things that drop?

Soldier. Men, while we speak,

Another moment, nothing.

Another Soldier. Some leap down;

Others would keep their desperate grasp: the fire

Loosens it; and they fall like shrivell'd grapes

Which none will gather. See it, while you can;

It totters, parts, sinks. What a crash! The sparks

Will blind our archers.

Another Soldier. What a storm of fire!

SCENE II. THE CONSUL'S HOUSE.

CONSUL, ERMINIA.

Erminia. The men you spoke with in the port have pass'd
The window, and seem entering.

Consul. Friends, come in.

Minuzzi (entering with STAMURA and others).

Sir Consul! we are here inopportunely,

Our work is done: God prosper'd it. Young lady!

We come no feasters at a consul's board.

Consul. Erminia! coverest thou our scanty fare

Because 'tis scanty, and not over-nice?

Child! thou hast eaten nothing.

Erminia. Quite enough.

Consul. No wonder thou hast lost thy appetite,

And sighest.

Erminia. I am sure I did not sigh;

Nor have I lost my appetite.

Consul. Then eat :
 Take off the napkin.

Erminia. Father! you well know
 What is beneath it.

Consul. Half a cake.

Erminia. Of beans,
 Of rye, of barley, swept from off the manger :
 My little horse had eaten them ere now,
 But . . .

Consul. The child weeps. Even such flesh must serve.
 Heaven grant us even this a few days hence.

Erminia (to STAMURA). Signor Antonio! do not look at me,
 I pray you, thinking of my greediness ;
 Eat, eat! I kept it . . . If the sea's fresh air
 Makes hungry those who sail upon it, surely
 It must . . . after such toil . . .

Stamura. Such toil 'twas not.

Erminia. Father! could you persuade him?

Stamura. Pray excuse me!
 I want no food.

Consul. Take what there is, and wine,
 Wine we have still in plenty, old and strong.

Stamura. Grant me this one half-beaker.

Erminia. Let me run
 And rinse it well.

Stamura. Forbear! forbear!

Consul. We have
 No man or maiden in the house; they all
 Fight or assist the fighting.

Erminia. He has taken
 And drank it every drop! Poor, poor Antonio!
 O how he must have thirsted!

[To STAMURA.
 'Twas half water.

Stamura. It was not very strong.

Minuzzi. And yet the colour
 Mounts to his eyes as 'twere sheer wine of Crete.

Consul. I am impatient (you must pardon me)
 To hear what you have done. Pour out the wine,
 Erminia! that can cause but short delay.

[*They drink, all but STAMURA. Cries in the street,*
 "Long live STAMURA!"

Stamura. Call they me? why me?
 [*Cries again. "Long live the brave ANGELICA."*

Stamura. My mother!

Minuzzi. Now for the wine! The boy will faint.

Angelica. Help! father!

Officer. Sir! saw you not the flames along the sky?
Has no one told you how that noble lady
Burnt down the tower with all its galleries,
Down to the very wheels?

Stamura. Who minds the tower?
Sir! is she safe? unhurt?

Officer. Sir! the ram's head,
Blacken'd with smoke, lean'd prone against the wall,
Then seem'd to shudder as 'twere half-alive.
Then fell the iron mass. It made no sound
Among the ashes. Had it made a loud one
There were much louder from the wretches crusht
Beneath it and its tower; some tearing off
Their burning armour agonised with pain,
And others pierced with red-hot nails that held
The rafters; others holding up their arms
Against the pitch and sulphur that pour'd down.
It was a sight! Well might it have detain'd,
Those who beheld it, from their duty here.
Up flew, not sparks alone, but splinters huge,
Crackling against the battlements, and drove
More men away than all their arrows could.

Stamura. Sir Consul! I must warm myself with fighting
After this dip. [Aside.

Nor see my mother first?
She would be first to blame me if I did. [Goes.

Consul. God prosper thee, brave youth, God prosper thee!

Erminia (aside). Discourteous man! he said no word to me!
He even forgot my father.

FATHER JOHN enters.

Minuzzi. Here comes one
Who can relate to you the whole exploit
Better than we.

Father John. Where is Antonio?

Minuzzi. Gone
This instant. How was it ye did not meet?

Father John. Ha! I am this time caught in my own net.
I knew the knave would run away at seeing me;
He told me if I came he would be gone,
Fearing to hear my story. So, sir Consul,
I stole in softly through the stable-door.
I can not keep my breath beneath the surface
So long as boys can. They are slenderer,
Less buoyant too, mayhap. Oft as I rose

My pilot-fish was with me ; that Stamura
Would never leave me.

Erminia. Father John ! your blessing !
You always used to give it me.

Father John. There, take it.
How the girl kisses my rough hand to-day ! [*Aside.*]
Forgetful, heedless, reckless of himself
He held a shapeless shield of cork before me,
Wherefrom a silent shower of arrows fell
From every galley, amid shouts like hunters'
As they caught sight of us. The bright steel points
Rebounding (for not one of them bit through)
Glistened a moment as they clove the water,
Then delved into the uneven furrow'd sands.
Surely the lustrous and unclosing eyes
Of well-poised fishes have enjoy'd to-day
A rarity ; they never saw before
So many feathers sticking all upright
Under the brine so many fathoms deep.

Consul. Father ! your gaiety will never fail you.

Father John. Not while it pleases God to use my arm
Or wits, such as they are, to serve my country.
But this I tell you : had the boy been less
Assiduous, or less brave, the fish had seen
Another sight they oftener see, and then
No Father John had blest that maiden more.

Minussi. Stamura saved our country, saving you.

Father John. And you too, both of you, did well your duty.

Minussi. Aground are five good galleys, and their crews
Await your mercy.

Father John. Did Stamura bring
His captive, that spruce Roman-spoken gallant ?

Consul. He brought none hither.

Minussi. Now our tale is told,
A little fighting will assuage the toil
And cold of diving. Brave Stamura toss'd
The net above his forehead fifty times
And drew it off and shoved it back again,
Impatient for his mother. He will knead
(I trow) a pasty German ere he see her ;
We too may lend a hand. Come, Father John !
Shrive as if we should need it.

Consul. Fare ye well.
Thank God ! I am not rich ; but this one day,
My friends, I would be richer, to reward you.
The ships are yours : let none else claim one plank.

SCENE III. THE QUAY.

PEOPLE. STAMURA.

Stamura. Stand off! The stores within the barks belong
 Alike and equally to all. Much grain
 Will there be spilt unless a steady hand
 Conveys it, and divides it house by house.
 Horses no fewer than three score are dragged
 Within the gates, from the last charge against us:
 What would ye? Wait another charge, and take it.
People. Brave, brave Antonio!

SCENE IV. ARCHBISHOP'S TENT.

ARCHBISHOP. *The Brothers* COSTANZIO and CORRADO.

Archbishop. Could ye not wait for death within the walls,
 But must rush out to meet it?

Costanzio. We could wait
 As others do.

Corrado. And fight we could as others.

Archbishop. Costanzio and Corrado! I am grieved
 That you should war against your lawful prince,
 Your father being most loyal.

Costanzio. So are we.

Archbishop. What! when he serves the emperor and king,
 And you the rabble?

Corrado. Who made men the rabble?

Archbishop. Will not your treason and your death afflict him?

Costanzio. Our treason would: God grant our death may not.

Corrado. We never took the oaths that he has taken,
 And owe no duty but to our own land.

Archbishop. Are ye Anconites?

Corrado. No, sir, but Italians,
 And in Ancona lies the cause of Italy.

Archbishop. Pernicious dreams! These drive young men
 astray;

But when they once take their own cause, instead
 Of ours who could direct them, they are lost:
 So will ye find it. As ye were not born
 In this vile city, what, pray, could have urged you
 To throw your fortunes into it when sinking?

Costanzio. Because we saw it sinking.

Corrado. While it prosper'd
 It needed no such feeble aid as ours.
 Marquises, princes, kings, popes, emperors,

Courted it then : and you, my lord archbishop,
Would have it even in its last decay.

Archbishop. There is a spirit in the land, a spirit
So pestilential that the fire of heaven
Alone can purify it.

Costanzio. Things being so,
Let us return and die with those we fought for.

Archbishop. Captious young man ! Ye die the death of
traitors.

Corrado. Alas ! how many better men have died
That death ! alas, how many must hereafter !

Archbishop. By following your example. Think of that ;
Be that your torture.

Costanzio. As we never grieved
At following our betters, grant, just Heaven !
That neither may our betters ever grieve

At following us, be the time soon or late. [To the Guards.

Archbishop. Lead off these youths. Separate them.

Corrado. My lord !

We are too weak (you see it) for resistance ;
Let us then, we beseech you, be together
In what is left of life !

Archbishop. One hour is left :
Hope not beyond.

Corrado. We did hope more ; we hoped
To be together, tho' but half the time.

Archbishop. It shall not be.

Costanzio. It shall be.

Archbishop. Art thou mad ?
I would not smile, but such pride forces me.

Costanzio. God, in whose holiest cause we took up arms,
Will reconcile us. Doubt it not, Corrado,
Altho' such men as that man there have said it.

SCENE V. CONSUL'S HOUSE.

STAMURA. ERMINIA.

Stamura. Lady ! you need not turn your face from me.
I leave the town for aid. But one perhaps
May bring it, if you listen to him.

Erminia. Who ?

Stamura. I made a captive.

Erminia. So I hear.

Stamura. I come

Seeking the consul : he expected me.

Erminia. And him ?

Stamura. Him also.

Erminia. Know you what he asks ?

Stamura. I know it.

Erminia. And you wish it? *you*, *Stamura* ?

Stamura. I have no voice in it.

Erminia. True. Go. I know it. [*STAMURA goes.*
Shameless ! to ask him ! Never did we meet
But, if his eye caught mine, he walk'd aside :
Yet, by some strange occurrence, we meet daily.

The CONSUL enters.

Consul. *Erminia* ! didst thou send away *Stamura* ?

Erminia. He went away : no need for me to send him.

Consul. Knowest thou whom he made his captive ?

Erminia. Yes :

That insolent young Roman.

Consul. Speak not thus

Before thou seest him.

Erminia. I will never see him.

Consul. Nay, I have promised scarce five minutes since
That thou shalt hear him.

Erminia. Has he then found favour

With you so suddenly ?

Consul. *Stamura* speaks

Much in his favour.

Erminia. Are they friends already ?

Consul. Hardly ; we must suppose. But here they come.

STAMURA. CLOVIO. CONSUL. ERMINIA.

Clovio. Sir Consul ! I am *Clovio Fizzarelli*.

Have you received the letter ?

Consul. I received it.

Clovio. On bended knee permit me to salute
The lady who shall rule my destiny,
Your fair *Erminia*.

Erminia. You are the Pope's nephew,
Sir *Clovio* ! I have heard ; and you come hither
Most strongly recommended.

Clovio. True, sweet lady !

But I do trust, with all humility,
There may be a mere trifle in myself,
Not to engage you in the first half-hour,
But so to plead for me, that in a day
Or two, or three at farthest . . .

Erminia. Sir, your pleader
Stands there ; you are his captive, and not mine.

Clovio. He knows me well. He threw my whole boat's crew
(Four of them) overboard, but found his match
In me.

Erminia. It seems so : does it not, Antonio ?

Stamura. More ; how much more !

Clovio. There ! He
could not deny it.

Erminia. And now he has persuaded my kind father
To grant you audience.

Clovio (to STAMURA). She is proud : I'll tame her.

Stamura (angrily). Sir ! [*Aside.*

No : he is my prisoner and my guest.

Erminia. This gentleman, who is so confidential
With you, and whom you whisper to for counsel,
May give my hand away . . . and will most gladly,
I doubt not . . . for my father can refuse
Nothing to one who made so great a prize,
Beside the preservation of the city.

Clovio. Speak then, my worthy friend, if thus the consul
Honours your valour ; speak for me ; and let me
Who owe my life, owe more than life to you.

Stamura. The consul knows what suits his honour best,
And the young lady seems not ill disposed
To shower his favour on such high desert.
I have my duties ; but this is not one.
Let the young lady give her hand herself.
If I had any wish . . . but I have none . . .
It should be, Sir, that you had won it first
By a brave action or a well-tryed love.
But, what is love ? My road lies toward the walls.

With your permission, Sir ! I have yours, lady ! [*To the CONSUL.*

[*STAMURA goes.*

Erminia. Father ! I am unwell. This gentleman
Comes unexpectedly, demands abruptly . . .

Clovio. Impatiently, but not abruptly.

Erminia. Sir !

I will not marry : never, never, never.

[*ERMINIA goes.*

Clovio. Ha ! ha ! all women are alike, Sir Consul.
Leave her to me.

Consul. Sir Clovio Fizzarelli !

I will do more than what you ask of me.

I grant you freedom. Go aboard the pinnace
Which bore you into port : and say at Rome

That you have seen men starving in the streets,
 Because his Holiness refused us help
 Unless a father gave a daughter up;
 And say the daughter would not sell her heart,
 Much less her country; and then add, Sir Clovio,
 (O were it true!) "All women are alike."

ACT III.

SCENE I. EPISCOPAL PALACE.

BISHOP of ANCONA and FATHER JOHN.

Bishop. I have been standing at my terrace-wall
 And counting those who pass and cry with hunger.
 Brother! the stoutest men are grown effeminate;
 Nay, worse; they stamp and swear, even in my presence,
 And looking up at me.

Father John. Sad times indeed!

Bishop. I calculate that giving each an ounce
 Only one day, scarce would a sack remain
 In my whole garner; I am so reduced.

Father John. I come to beg your lordship for one ounce
 Of your fine flour, to save a child; to save
 A mother, who loathes ordinary food . . .
 Not ordinary, but most bitter lupin:
 She has no other in the house.

Bishop. No other?
 Poor soul! This famine is a dreadful thing!
 Pestilence always follows it! God help us!
 I tremble; I start up in sleep.

Father John. My lord!
 An ounce of meal, a single ounce, might calm
 These tremblings, well applied. The nurse that should be
 Can be no nurse: the mother very soon
 Will be no mother, and the child no child.

Bishop. You know not how things stand, good brother
 John!

This very morning, as I hope for grace,
 I paid three golden pieces for the head,
 Think you, of what? an ass!

Father John (aside). The cannibal!

[To the BISHOP.]

Ah, my good lord! they bear high prices now.

Bishop. Why, brother! you yourself are grown much thinner.
 How can you do your duty?

Father John. Were I not
Much thinner, I should think I had not done it.

Bishop. My cook assures me that with wine and spice
Elicampane, cumin, angelica,
Garlic, and sundry savory herbs, stored by
Most providentially, the Lord be praised!
He can make that strange head quite tolerable . . .
The creature was a young one . . . what think you?

Father John. They are more tolerable than the old.

Bishop. The sellers take advantage of bad times,
Quite without conscience, shame, respect for persons,
Or fear of God. What can such men expect?
You must have seen sad sights about our city:
I wonder you are what you are.

Father John. Sad sights
Indeed!

Bishop. But all will give their confessor
Part of their pittance; and the nearer death
The readier; knowing what the church can do.
Tell me now, for my entrails yearn to hear it,
Do they not take due care of you?

Father John. No meals
Have now their stated hour. Unwillingly
I enter houses where the family
Sits round the table at the spare repast.
Sometimes they run and hide it.

Bishop. Most unmannerly!
Inhuman, I would add unchristianlike.

Father John. Sometimes they push toward me the untasted
And uninviting food, look wistfully,
Press me; yet dread acceptance. Yesterday
A little girl, the youngest of the five,
Was raising to her lips a mealy bean
(I saw no other on the unsoil'd plate)
And, looking at my eyes fixt hard on hers,
And thinking they were fixt upon the morsel,
Pusht it between my lips, and ran away.

Bishop. Brother! I should have call'd her a good child;
I should myself have given the benediction
With my own hand, and placed it on her head:
I wonder you don't praise her. Brother John!
I have my nones to run thro'; so, good-by.

Father John. Just God! does this house stand? Dark are
thy ways,
Inscrutable! Be thy right hand our guide!

SCENE II. SENATE-HOUSE.

SENATORS. CONSUL.

Consul. Senators! ye have call'd me to debate
On our condition.

Senator. Consul! we are lost.

Consul. All are who think so.

Second Senator. Even the best want food.

Consul. The bravest do.

Third Senator. How shall men fight without it?

Fourth Senator. Concord and peace might have return'd.

Consul. By yielding,

Think ye? Not they: contempt and sorrow might.

Can there be ever concord (peace there may be)

Between the German and Italian? None.

Remember how that ancient city fell,

Milano. Seven whole years resisted she

The imperial sword: she listened to conditions

And fell. The soldiers of His Majesty . .

His soldiers, ay, his very court . . shed tears

At such affliction, at such utter ruin,

At such wide wails, such universal woe.

They all were equal then; for all were slaves,

Scatter'd, the poor, the rich, the brave, the coward,

Thro' Bergamo, Pavia, Lodi, Como,

The cities of the enemy. There stood

No vestige of the walls, no church to pray in . .

And what was left to pray for? What but Cæsar?

Throw rather all your wealth into the sea

Than let the robber priest lay hold upon it,

And, if ye die of famine, die at least

In your own houses while they *are* your own.

But there are many yet whose hearts and arms

Will save you all: to-day you all can fight,

The enemy shall feed you all to-morrow.

Were it no shame a priest should seize the prey

That kings and emperors dropt with broken talon?

The eagle flew before your shouts; and now

A vulture must swoop down! but vultures keep

From living men and from warm blood; they revel

(And most the Roman vulture) in corruption.

Have ye forgotten how your fathers fought,

When Totila with Goths invincible

Besieged you; not with priests and choristers;

When twenty-seven ships assail'd your port

And when eleven only ever left it?

Rome fell before him twice ; not once Ancona.
Your fathers saved the city . . ye shall save her.

Senator. Weapons are insufficient ; courage, vows,
Avail not. We are unprepared for war :
Scanty was our last harvest : and these winds
Are adverse. They know that who now defy us,
Blockading us alike by sea and land.

Consul. We some are poor, we some are prosperous,
We all alike owe all we have : the air
Is life alike to all, the sun is warmth,
The earth, its fruits and flocks, are nutriment,
Children and wives are comforts ; all partake
(Or may partake) in these. Shall hoarded grain
Or gold be less in common, when the arms
That guard it are not those that piled it up,
But those that shrink without it ? Come, ye rich,
Be richer still : strengthen your brave defenders,
And make all yours that was not yours before.
Dares one be affluent where ten thousand starve ?
Open your treasuries, your granaries,
But throw mine open first. Another year
Will roughen this equality again,
The rich be what they were ; the poor . . alas !
What they were too perhaps . . but every man
More happy, each one having done his duty.

Senator (to another). Hark ! the young fools applaud ! they
rise around ;
They hem him in ; they seize and kiss his hand ;
He shakes our best supporters.

Another. Give the sign
To those without.

[PEOPLE enter.]

Consul. Who called you hither ? [Various voices.

First. Want.

Second. Famine.

Third. Our families.

Fourth. I had three sons ;

One hath been slain, one wounded.

Fifth. Only one

Had I : my loss is greatest.

Sixth. Grant us peace.

Sir Consul, peace we plead for, only peace.

Consul. Will peace bring back the dead ? will peace restore
Lost honour ? will peace heal the wounds your sons
And brothers writhe with ? They who gave those wounds

Shall carry home severer, if they live,
 And never in my consulate shall laugh
 At those brave men whom men less brave desert.
 True, some have fallen : but before they fell
 They won the field ; nor now can earthly power
 Take from their cold clencht hands the spoil they grasp ;
 No mortal spoil, but glory. Life, my sons,
 Life may lose all : the seal that none can break
 Hath stamp't their names, all registered above.

Senator (to a Man near). Speak ; you poor fool ! speak
 loudly, or expect
 From me no favour . . . and tell that man next.

Man. Oh ! we are starving.

Consul. Better starve than serve.

Another. He has no pity.

Consul. What is that I hear ?
 I have no pity. Have I not a daughter ?

Another. O what a daughter ! How compassionate !
 How charitable ! Had she been born poor
 She could not more have pitied poverty.

Consul. Two ounces of coarse bread, wine, which she loathes,
 And nothing more, sustain her.

Another. God sustains her ;
 He will not leave his fairest work to perish.

Consul. Fight then, fight bravely, while ye can, my friends !
 In God have confidence, if none in me.

[*Shouts of applause. Part of the People leave the Senators.*]

Senator (to another). Seducer of the people ! shall it end
 Thus vilely ? [To the CONSUL.]

. You have stores at home, Sir Consul !
 You have wide lands.

Another Senator. You should support your order.

Consul. My order ! God made one ; of that am I.
 Stores, it appears, I have at home ; wide lands ;
 Are those at home too ? or within my reach ?
 Paternal lands I do inherit ; wide
 They are enough, but stony, mountainous,
 The greater part unprofitable.

Senator. Some
 The richest in rich wine.

Consul. Few days ago
 Nearly a hundred barrels were unbroached.

Another Senator. A hundred loaves, tho' small indeed and
 dry,

Would they be worth in such distress as ours.
 We could raise half among us.

Consul. Shame upon you !
Had not your unwise laws and unfair thrift
Prohibited the entrance of supplies
While they *could* enter, never had this famine
Stalked through the people.

Senator. But the laws are laws.

Consul. Yours ; never theirs.

Another Senator. Why thus inflame the people ?

Consul. Who brought the people hither ? for what end ?
To serve you in your avarice ; to cry *peace* !
Not knowing peace from servitude.

Senator. For quiet,
Spare them at least a portion of the wine.

Consul. Nor them nor you ; nor price nor force shall gain it.

People. Are we to perish ? Hunger if we must,
Let us be strengthen'd by a draught of wine
To bear it on.

Senator. Wine is the oil of life,
And the lamp burns with it which else were spent.

People. Sir Consul ! we forbear ; we honour you,
But tell us, ere we sink, where one flask lies.

Consul. Go ask the women labouring of child,
Ask those who nurse their infants, ask the old,
Who can not fight, ask those who fought the best,
The wounded, maim'd, disabled, the Anconites.
Sirs ! if ye find one flask within our cellar,
Crack it, and throw the fragments in my face.

People. Let us away. [*Shouts of applause.*]

Consul. Follow me to the walls ;
And you, too, senators, learn there your duty.

People. We swear to do our best.

Consul. Sworn wisely ! Life
Is now more surely to be won by arms
Than death is, and the sword alone can win it.
I lead the way ; let who will lag behind.

SCENE III. THE CITY.

PAOLUCCI, Officers, Citizens.

Officer. The consul has been wounded. Who is left
To lead us ? and what leader would suffice ?
The strongest sink with famine, lying down
Along the battlements, and only raised
When sounds the trumpet.

First Citizen. And most fall again.

Second Citizen. Our day is come, the day of our disgrace.

Paolucci. Ours never was that day, and never shall be.
 Ye may have lost your consul (let us hope
 He is not lost to us) but we are sure
 His memory and example yet remain
 With all their life in them.

[*To the People.*]

Young men! perhaps
 Ye know me not: your fathers knew me well;
Their fathers better. Three-score years ago
 I was your consul: none then preached surrender;
 And let none now: yet there were those around
 Who would have pinfolded the quiet flock
 As gladly as yon shepherd at the gate.

People. We can resist no longer. Who can count
 The slain?

Paolucci. Say, rather, who can praise the slain?
 Glorified souls! happy your sleep! ye hear
 No shameful speech from brethren!

People. Arms alone
 Should not subdue us: famine has: we starve.

Paolucci. While life remains life's sufferings will arise,
 Whether from famine or from sharper sting
 Than famine: upon every hearth almost
 There creeps some scorpion never seen till felt.
 But until every arm that guards our walls
 Drop helpless at the starting ribs, until
 That hour, stand all united. Ye despair
 Untimely. He who rules us rules us well,
 Exciting no false hope, as bad men do
 When they have led where none can extricate.
 I was your consul while the king Lothaire
 Besieged the city, proud as any prelate,
 Swearing he would reduce it. Other kings
 Have sworn the same . . . and kept their word like kings . . .
 Cursing and flying. We have met brave foes;
 But they met braver. Fly; and let the crook
 Drag a vile flock back from its flight to slaughter.

All. We scorn the thought. But where lies human help?

Paolucci. I may be spared to seek it, spared to try
 If one brave man breathes yet among the powerful.
 Who knows not Marchesella?

Officer. Brave he is,
 But mindful of the emperor. He saw
 Milano, which had stood two thousand years,
 Sink; * every tree, on hill or vale, cut down,

* Ancona was besieged 1162, 1174.

The vine, the olive, ripe and unripe corn
 Burnt by this minister of God. Throughout
 There was no shade for sick men to die under,
 There was no branch to strow upon the bier.

Another Officer. His father was courageous, why not he?

A third Officer. Above all living men is Marchesella
 Courageous: but pray what are our deserts
 With him, that he should hazard for our sake
 His lordly castles and his wide domains?
 Perhaps his fame in arms! 'Twere mad to hope it.
 Prudence, we know, for ever guides his courage.

Paolucci. If generous pity dwells not in his house,
 As once it did, with every other virtue,
 Seek it, where brave men never seek in vain,
 In woman's breast: away to Bertinoro:
 Take heart: the countess is a Frangipani:
 There are a thousand trumpets in that name:
 Methinks I hear them blowing toward Ancona.
 Old men talk long: but be not ye so idle:
 Hie to the walls: I will sue her. To arms!
 To arms! the consul of past years commands you.

SCENE IV. CONSUL'S HOUSE.

PAOLUCCI. CONSUL. ERMINIA.

Paolucci. Consul! how fare you?

Consul. Not amiss.

Paolucci. But wounded?

Consul. There was more blood than wound, they say who
 saw it.

Erminia. My father, sir, slept well all night.

Paolucci. All night

An angel watched him; he must needs sleep well.

Consul. I drove away that little fly in vain,
 It flutter'd round the fruit whose skin was broken.

Erminia. Sweet father! talk not so; nor much at all.

Paolucci. Consul! I have not many days of life,
 As you may see; and old men are in want
 Of many little things which those in power
 Can give: and 'twere amiss to hold them back
 Because unclaim'd before.

Consul. I well remember,
 Though then a child, how all this city praised
 Your wisdom, zeal, and probity, when consul.
 Ancona then was flourishing; but never

Were those compensated who served their country,
 Except by serving her; 'twas thought enough;
 We think so still. Beside, the treasury
 Is emptied, that it may procure us food
 And troops. Be sure the very first that eats
 The strangers' corn (if any reach our port)
 Shall be no other than yourself: your age
 And virtue merit from us this distinction.

Paolucci. Sir Consul! I want more than that.

Consul.

Receive it

And welcome from the father and the man,
 Not from the consul. Now would you yourself
 Act differently (I ask) on this occasion?

Paolucci. More kindly, no; but differently, yes.

Consul. What would you from me?

Paolucci.

High distinction, consul!

Consul. I will propose it, as I justly may,
 And do regret it has been so deferred.

Paolucci. May I speak plainly what ambition prompts?

Consul. I hear all claims.

Paolucci.

Those sacks hold heavy sums.

Consul. Avarice was never yet imputed to you.

Paolucci. 'Tis said you can not move them from the town.

Consul. Difficult, dangerous, doubtful, such attempt.

The young Stamura loves bold enterprizes,
 And may succeed where others would despair:
 But, such the lack of all that life requires
 Even for a day, I dare not send one loaf
 Aboard his bark. Hunger would urge the many
 To rush and seize it.

Paolucci. They would not seize *me*.

One loaf there is at home: that boy shall share it.

Erminia. He would not, though he pined.

Consul.

A youth so abstinent

I never knew.

Paolucci. But when we are afloat . .

Consul.

We shall not be:

We think not of escape.

Paolucci.

No: God forbid!

We will meet safety in the path of honour.

Consul. Why say *afloat* then?

Paolucci.

Only he and I.

This is the guerdon I demand, the crown

Of my grey hairs.

Erminia.

Alas! what aid could either

Afford the other? O sir! do not go!

You are too old; he much too rash . . . Dear father!
If you have power, if you have love, forbid it!

Paolucci. It was advised that younger ones should go:
Some were too daring, some were too despondent:
I am between these two extremes.

Consul. But think
Again!

Paolucci. I have no time for many thoughts,
And I have chosen out of them the best.

Erminia. He never will return! he goes to die!
I knew he would!

Consul. His days have been prolonged
Beyond the days of man: and there goes with him
One who sees every danger but his own.

SCENE V. SEASIDE. NIGHT.

PAOLUCCI, STAMURA.

Paolucci. I feel the spray upon my face already.
Is the wind fair?

Stamura. 'Tis fiercely fair.

Paolucci. The weather
Can not be foul then.

Stamura (lifting him aboard). Sit down here. Don't tremble.

Paolucci. Then tell the breeze to wax a trifle warmer,
And lay thy hand upon those hissing waves.
She grates the gravel . . . We are off at last.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. CASTLE OF BERTINORO.

COUNTESS OF BERTINORO, MARCHESELLA, PAOLUCCI, and STAMURA.

Page. My lady! here are two such men as never
Enter'd a palace-gate.

Countess. Who are they?

Page. One

Older than anything I ever saw,
Alive or dead; the other a stout youth,
Guiding him, and commanding all around
To stand aside, and give that elder way;
At first with gentle words, and then with stern.
Coarse their habiliments, their beards unshorn,
Yet they insist on entrance to my lady.

Countess. Admit the elder, but exclude the other.

Wait.

[To MARCHESELLA.

If the younger be his son, what little
Of service I may render to the father
Will scarce atone for keeping him apart. [To the Page.
Go; bid them enter; both.

[STAMURA, having led PAOLUCCI in, retires.

Paolucci. I come, O countess!
Imploring of your gentleness and pity,
To save from fire and sword, and, worse than either,
Worse, and more imminent, to save from famine
The few brave left, the many virtuous,
Virgins and mothers (save them!) in Ancona.

Countess. Nay, fall not at my knee. Age must not that . .
Raise him, good Marchesella!

Paolucci. You too, here,
Illustrious lord?

Marchesella. What! and art thou still living,
Paolucci? faithful, hospitable soul!
We have not met since childhood . . mine, I mean.

Paolucci. Smile not, my gentle lord! too gracious then,
Be now more gracious; not in looks or speech,
But in such deeds as you can best perform.
Friendship another time might plead for us;
Now bear we what our enemy would else
Seize from us, all the treasures of our city,
To throw them at your feet for instant aid.
Help, or we perish. Famine has begun . .
Begun? has almost ended . . with Ancona.

Countess. Already? We have been too dilatory.

Marchesella. I could not raise the money on my lands
Earlier; it now is come. I want not yours:
Place it for safety in this castle-keep,
If such our lady's pleasure.

Countess. Until peace.

Marchesella. My troops are on the march.

Countess. And mine not yet?
Repose you, sir! they shall arrive with you,
Or sooner. Is that modest youth your son?

Paolucci. Where is he? gone again?

Countess. When you first enter'd.

Paolucci. Some angel whisper'd your benign intent
Into his ear, else had he never left me.
My son? Who would not proudly call him so?
Soon shall you hear what mother bore the boy,
And where he dash'd the galleys, while that mother
Fired their pine towers, already wheel'd against
Our walls, and gave us time . . for what? to perish.

Marchesella. No, by the saints above! not yet, not yet.

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

Countess. Merenda is announced. Sir, I entreat you
To lead me! Grant one favour more; and hint not
To our young friend that we have learnt his prowess.

[*To a Page.*]

Conduct the noble youth who waits without.

SCENE II.

COUNTESS, MARCHESSELLA, PAOLUCCI, STAMURA, *at Table.*

Countess (to Stamura). Sir, there are seasons when 'tis
incivility

To ask a name; 'twould now be more uncivil
To hesitate.

Stamura. Antonio is my name.

Countess. Baptismal. Pray, the family?

Stamura. *Stamura;*

But *that* my honour'd father gave in marriage
To her who wears it brighter day by day:
She calls me rather by the name he bore.

Countess. It must be known and cherisht.

Stamura. By the bravest

And most enduring in my native place;
It goes no farther: we are but just noble.

Countess. He who could heed the tempest, and make serve
Unruly ocean, not for wealth, nor harm
To any but the spoiler, high above
That ocean, high above that tempest's wing,
He needs no turret to abut his name,
He needs no crescent to stream light on it,
Nor castellan, nor seneschal, nor herald.

Paolucci. Ha! boy, those words make thy breast rise and fall,
Haply as much as did the waves. The town
Could ill repay thee; Beauty overpays.

Countess. Talk what the young should hear; nor see the
need
Of glorious deeds in transitory tints,
Fainter or brighter.

Paolucci. I was wrong.

Countess. Not quite:
For beauty, in thy native town, young man,
May feel her worth in recompensing thine.

Stamura (aside). Alas! alas! she perishes! while here
We tarry.

Paolucci (overhearing). She? Who perishes?

Stamura. The town.

Paolucci. How the boy blushes at that noble praise !

Countess. They blush at glory who deserve it most.

. . Blushes soon go : the dawn alone is red.

Stamura. We know what duty, not what glory is.

The very best among us are not rich

Nor powerful.

Countess. Are they anywhere ?

Paolucci. His deeds,

If glorious in themselves, require no glory.

Even this siege, those sufferings, who shall heed ?

Countess. He gives most light by being not too high.

Remember by what weapon fell the chief

Of Philistines. Did brazen chariots, driven

By giants, roll against him ? From the brook,

Striking another such, another day,

A little pebble stretcht the enormous bulk

That would have fill'd it and have turn'd its course.

And in the great deliverers of mankind

Whom find ye ? Those whom varlet pipers praise.

The greatest of them all, by all adored,

Did Babylon from brazen-belted gate,

Not humble straw-rooft Bethlehem, send forth ?

We must not be too serious. Let us hear

How were the cables cut.

Paolucci. I saw the shears

That clipt them. Father John, before he went,

Show'd me them, how they workt. He himself held

The double crescent of sharp steel, in form

Like that swart insect's which you shake from fruit

About the kernel. This enclaspt the cable ;

And two long handles (a stout youth, at each

Extremity, pushing with all his strength

Right forward) sunder'd it. Then swiftly flew

One vessel to the shore ; and then another :

And hardly had the youths or Father John

Time to take breath upon the upper wave,

When down they sank again and there swang round

Another prow, and dasht upon the mole.

Then many blithe Venetians fell transfixt

With arrows, many sprang into the sea

And cried for mercy. Upon deck appeared

The pope's own nephew, who ('tis said) had come

To arbitrate. He leapt into a boat

Which swam aside, most gorgeously array'd,

And this young man leapt after him and seized him.

He, when he saw a dagger at his throat,
Bade all his crew, four well-built men, surrender.

Stamura. They could not have feared *me*: they saw our archers.

Countess. And where is now your prisoner?

Stamura. He desired

An audience of the consul.

Countess. To what end?

Stamura. I know not: I believe to court his daughter.

Countess. Is the girl handsome? Is that question harder
Than what I askt before? will he succeed?

Stamura. Could he but save from famine our poor city,
And . . . could he make her happy . . .

Countess. Pray go on.

It would delight you then to see him win her?

Stamura. O that I had not saved him! or myself!

Countess. She loves him then? And you hate foreigners.
I do believe you like the fair Erminia
Yourself.

Stamura. She hates me. Who likes those that hate him?

Countess. I never saw such hatred as you bear her:
If she bears you the like . . .

Stamura. She can do now

No worse than what she has done.

Countess. Who knows that?

I am resolved to see.

Stamura. O lady Countess!

How have I made an enemy of you?

Place me the lowest of your band, but never

Affront her with the mention of my name.

When the great work which you have undertaken

Is done, admit me in your castle-walls,

And never let me see our own again.

Countess. I think I may accomplish what you wish;
But, recollect, I make no promises.

SCENE III. OPEN SPACE NEAR THE BALISTA GATE IN ANCONA.

The Lady Malaspina, her Infant, and a Soldier.

Soldier. I am worn down with famine, and can live
But few hours more.

L. Malaspina. I have no food.

Soldier. Nor food

Could I now swallow. Bring me water, water!

L. Malaspina. Alas! I can not. Strive to gain the fountain.

Soldier. I have been nigh.

L. Malaspina. And could not reach it?

Soldier. Crowds

I might pierce through, but how thrust back their cries?

They madden'd me to flight ere half-way in.

Some upright . . . no, none that . . . but some unfallen,

Yet pressing down with their light weight the weaker.

The brows of some were bent down to their knees,

Others (the hair seized fast by those behind)

Lifted for the last time their eyes to heaven;

And there were waves of heads one moment's space

Seen, then unseen for ever. Wails rose up

Half stifled underfoot, from children some,

And some from those who bore them.

L. Malaspina. Mercy! mercy!

O blessed Virgin! thou wert mother too!

How didst *thou* suffer! how did *He*! Save, save

At least the infants, if all else must perish.

Soldier! brave soldier! dost thou weep? then hope.

Soldier. I suffer'd for myself; deserve I mercy?

L. Malaspina. He who speaks thus shall find it. Try to rise.

Soldier. No: could I reach the fountain in my thirst,
I would not.

L. Malaspina. Life is sweet.

Soldier. To brides, to mothers.

L. Malaspina. Alas! how soon may those names pass away!

I would support thee partly, wert thou willing,

But my babe sleeps.

Soldier. Sleep, little one, sleep on!

I shall sleep too as soundly, by and by.

L. Malaspina. Courage, one effort more.

Soldier. And tread on children!

On children clinging to my knees for strength

To help them on, and with enough yet left

To pull me down, but others pull down them.

God! let me bear this thirst, but never more

Bear that sad sight! Tread on those tiny hands

Clasping the dust! See those dim eyes upturn'd,

Those rigid lips reproachless! Man may stir,

Woman may shake, my soul; but children, children!

O God! those are thine own! make haste to help them!

Happy that babe!

L. Malaspina. Thou art humane.

Soldier. 'Tis said
That hunger is almost as bad as wealth

To make men selfish ; but such feebleness
Comes over me, all things look dim around,
And life most dim, and least worth looking after.

L. Malaspina. I pity thee. Day after day myself
Have lived on things unmeet for sustenance.
My milk is failing . . . Rise . . .

(*To the Child*) My little one !
God will feed *thee* ! Be sleep thy nourisher
Until his mercies strengthen me afresh !
Sink not : take heart : advance : Here, where from heaven
The Virgin-mother can alone behold us,
Draw some few drops. [*The tocsin sounds.*]

Soldier. Ha ! my ears boom thro' faintness.
What sounds ?

L. Malaspina. The bell.

Soldier. Then they are at the gate . . .
I can but thank you . . . Give me force, O Heaven !
For this last fight ! . . . and keep from harm these twain !

MALASPINA and Child alone.

L. Malaspina. And still thou sleepest, my sweet babe ! Is
death
Like sleep ? Ah, who then, who would fear to die ?
How beautiful is all serenity !
Sleep, a child's sleep, O how far more serene,
And O, how far more beautiful than any !
Whether we breathe so gently or breathe not,
Slight is the difference. But the pangs, the rage
Of famine who can bear ? . . . unless to raise
Her child above it !

(*Two Priests are passing.*)

First Priest. Who sits yonder ? bent
O'er her dead babe ? as many do within
Their houses !

Second Priest. Surely, surely, it must be
She who, not many days ago, was praised
For beauty, purity, humility,
Above the noblest of Anconite dames.

First Priest. The Lady Malaspina ?

Second Priest. But methinks
The babe is not dead yet.

First Priest. Why think you so ?

Second Priest. Because she weeps not over it.

First Priest. For that
I think it dead. It then could pierce no more

Her tender heart with its sad sobs and cries.
 But let us hasten from the place to give •
 The dying their last bread, the only bread
 Yet unconsumed, the blessed eucharist.
 Even this little, now so many die,
 May soon be wanting.

Second Priest. God will never let
 That greater woe befall us.

[*The Priests go.*

Malaspina.

Who runs hither?

[*The Soldier falls before her.*

Art thou come back? So! thou couldst run, O vile!
Soldier. Lady! your gentleness kept life within me
 Until four fell.

L. Malaspina. Thyself unwounded?

Soldier.

No;

If arms alone can wound the soldier's breast,
 They toucht me not this time; nor needed they;
 Famine had done what your few words achieved.

L. Malaspina. They were too harsh. Forgive me!

Soldier.

Not the last.

Those were not harsh! Enter my bosom, enter,
 Kind pitying words! untie there life's hard knot,
 And let it drop off easily! How blest!

I have not robb'd the child, nor shamed the mother! [*He dies.*

L. Malaspina. Poor soul! and the last voice he heard on earth

Was bitter blame, unmerited! And whose?

Mine, mine! Should they who suffer sting the sufferer?

O saints above! avenge not this misdeed!

What doth his hand hold out? A little crate,

With German letters round its inner rim . . .

And . . . full of wine! Yet did his lips burn white!

He tasted not what might have saved his life,

But brought it hither, to be scorn'd and die.

[*Singers are heard in the same open space before an image.*]

Singers! where are they? My sight swims; my strength

Fails me; I can not rise, nor turn to look;

But only I can pray, and never voice

Prays like the sad and silent heart its last.

OLD MEN.

The village of the laurel grove •
 Hath seen thee hovering high above,
 Whether pure innocence was there,
 Or helpless grief, or ardent prayer.

• The House of Loreto was not yet brought thither by the angels.

O Virgin! hither turn thy view,
 For these are in Ancona too.
 Not for ourselves implore we aid,
 But thou art mother, thou art maid;
 Behold these suppliants, and secure
 Their humbled heads from touch impure!

MAIDENS.

Hear, maid and mother! hear our prayer!
 Be brave and aged men thy care!
 And, if they bleed, O may it be
 In honour of thy Son and thee!
 When innocence is wrong'd, we know
 Thy bosom ever felt the blow.
 Yes, pure One! there are tears above,
 But tears of pity, tears of love,
 And only from thine eyes they fall,
 Those eyes that watch and weep for all.

[*They prostrate themselves.*]

L. Malaspina. How faintly sound those voices! altho' many;
 At every stave they cease, and rest upon
 That slender reed which only one can blow.
 But *she* has heard them! Me too *she* has heard.
 Heaviness, sleep comes over me, deep sleep:
 Can it, so imperturbable, be death?
 And do I for the last time place thy lip
 Where it may yet draw life from me, my child!
 Thou, who alone canst save him, thou wilt save.

[*She dies: the child on her bosom still sleeping.*]

SCENE IV. NIGHT: THE MOLE OF ANCONA.

CONSUL. SENATOR.

Senator. Sir consul, you have heard (no doubt) that fires
 Have been seen northward all along the sky,
 And angels with their flaming swords have sprung
 From hill to hill. With your own eyes behold
 No mortal power advancing. Host so numerous
 No king or emperor or soldan led.

Consul. A host, a mighty host, is there indeed?

Senator. It covers the whole range of Falcognara.

Consul. Methinks some fainter lights flit scatter'dly
 Along the coast, more southward.

Senator. The archbishop
 Hath seen the sign, and leads away his troops.

Consul. We are too weak to follow. Can then aid

Have come so soon? 'Tis but the second night
Since we besought it.

Senator. In one hour, one moment,
Such aid can come, and *has* come. Think not, consul,
That force so mighty and so sudden springs
From earth. And what Italian dares confront
The German?

Consul. What Italian! All, sir; all.

ACT V.

SCENE I. TENT OF MARCHESELLA, NEAR ANCONA. EARLY MORNING.

MARCHESELLA. OFFICERS. PAOLUCCI.

Officer. My general! easily I executed
Your orders.

Marchesella. Have they fled, then?

Officer. Altogether.

Marchesella. And could you reach the gate?

Officer. And enter too.

Paolucci's seal unbarr'd it; not until
I held two loaves above my head, and threw
My sword before me.

Marchesella. And what saw you then?

Officer. There is a civil war within the city,
And insolence and drunkenness are rife.
Children and old and middle-aged were reeling,
And some were slipping over, some devouring
Long-podded weeds with jagged edges, cast
Upon the shore.

Paolucci. Famine had gone thus far
(Altho' with fewer) ere we left the mole.
The ancient garden-wall was overthrown
To get the twisted roots of fennel out;
The fruit-tree that could give no fruit gave buds;
The almond's bloom was withering, but whoe'er
Possess that treasure pierced the bark for gum;
The mulberry sent her tardy shoot, the cane
Her tenderer one; the pouting vine untied
Her trellised gems; the apple-tree threw down
Her load of viscous mistletoe: they all
(Little it was!) did all they could for us.

Marchesella. The Germans (look!) have left their tents behind:
We will explore them; for your wary soldiers
Suspect, and well they may, some stratagem.

SCENE II. ERMINIA'S CHAMBER.

ERMINIA. MARIA.

[*MARIA is going.* ERMINIA calls her back.*Erminia.* Maria, is the countess very fair?*Maria.* Most beautiful. But you yourself must judge. She sent me for you in the gentlest tone, And far more anxious to see *you*, than you (It seems) are to see *her*.*Erminia.* I am afraid To see her.*Maria.* You afraid! Whom should *you* fear? Beautiful as she is, are not you more so?*Erminia.* So you may think; others think otherwise.*Maria.* She is so affable! When many lords Stood round about her, and the noblest of them And bravest, Marchesella, who would give His lands, his castles, even his knighthood for her . . . Whom do you think she call'd to her? . . . the youth Who cut the cables, and then hid himself That none might praise him . . . him who brought in safety Your lover to the shore.*Erminia (angrily).* Whom?*Maria.* Whom? Stamura.*Erminia.* What heart could he not win . . . not scorn . . . not break?*Maria.* I do not hear those shy ones ever break A woman's heart, or win one. They may scorn; But who minds that?*Erminia.* Leave me.*Maria.* And tell the countess You hasten to her presence?*Erminia.* Is *he* there?*Maria.* Who?*Erminia.* Dull, dull creature!*Maria.* The brave Marchesella?*Erminia.* Are there none brave but he?*Maria.* O! then, Stamura.

No: when he led her from the mole again, And she had enter'd the hall-door, he left her.

Erminia. I fear'd he might be with her. Were he with her, What matter! I could wait until . . . Wait! why? He would not look at me, nor I at him.*Maria.* No; I can answer for him. Were he born Under the waves, and never saw the sun,

He could not have been colder. But you might
Have lookt at him, perhaps.

Erminia. Not I indeed.

Maria. Few men are like him. How you hug me!

Erminia. Go . .

I will run first . . Go . . I am now quite ready.

SCENE III. CHAMBER IN THE CONSUL'S HOUSE.

COUNTESS and ERMINIA.

Countess. The depths of love are warmer than the shallows,
Purer, and much more silent.

Erminia (aside). Ah! how true!

Countess. He loves you, my sweet girl; I know he does.

Erminia. He says not so.

Countess. Child! all men are dissemblers:
The generous man dissembles his best thoughts,
His worst the ungenerous.

Erminia. If, indeed, he loves me . .

Countess. He told me so.

Erminia. Ah! then he loves me not.

Who, who that loves, can tell it?

Countess. Who can hide it?

His voice betray'd him; half his words were traitors . .

To him, my sweet Erminia! not to you.

What! still unhappy! [ERMINIA weeps.

Erminia. Let me weep away

A part of too much happiness.

Countess. I wish

One more could see it. From these early showers

What sweets, that never spring but once, arise!

SCENE IV.

CONSUL enters.

Consul. Before you leave us, since you part to-day,
From our full hearts take what lies deepest there,
And what God wills beyond all sacrifice . .

Our praises, our thanksgivings. Thee we hail,
Protectress! But can words, can deeds, requite
The debt of our deliverance?

Countess. What I ask
Should not infringe your freedom. Power is sweet,
And victory claims something. I am fain

To exercise a brief authority

Within the walls, appointing you my colleague.

Consul. Lady! this very night my power expires.

Countess. And mine, with your connivance, shall begin.

Consul. Lady! all power within the walls is yours.

SCENE V. ARCH OF TRAJAN ON THE MOLE.

CONSUL, MARCHESELLA, COUNTESS, SENATORS, &c.

Consul. We have no flowers to decorate the arch
Whence the most glorious ruler of mankind
Smiles on you, lady! and on you, who rival
His valour, his humanity, his bounty.
Nor are there many voices that can sing
Your praises. For, alas! our poor frail nature
(May it be seldom!) hears one call above
The call of gratitude. The famishing
Devour your bread. But, though we hear no praises,
There are who sing them to their harps on high,
And He who can alone reward you both
Listens in all his brightness to the song.
I do entreat you, blemish not your glory.
No exercise of might or sovranity
Can ever bring you such content again
As this day's victory, these altar-prayers
From rescued men, men perishing; from child
And parent: every parent, every child,
Who hears your name, should bless you evermore.

Countess. I find, sir, I must win you through your daughter.

Consul. The girl is grateful: urge her not too far:

I could not, without much compunction, thwart her.

Erminia! go: we meet again to-morrow.

Countess. Come hither, my sweet girl! Coy as thou art,

I have seen one, once in my life, as coy.

Stand forth thou skulking youth! Here is no sea

To cover thee; no ships to scatter. Take

This maiden's hand . . . unless her sire forbid . . .

Holdest thou back? after confession too!

I will reveal it.

[To ERMINIA.

And art thou ashamed?

Erminia. I am ashamed.

Countess. Of what? thou simpleton!

Erminia. I know not what . . . of having *been* ashamed.

Consul. Antonio! if thou truly lovedst her,
What, after deeds so valiant, kept thee silent?

Stamura. Inferior rank, deep reverence, due fear.
I know who rules our country.

Consul.

I, who saved her.

[FATHER JOHN enters.]

F. John. What! and am I to be without reward?

Consul. Father! be sure it will be voted you.

Marchesella. And may not we too make our pious offerings,
For such they are, when such men will receive them.

F. John. I claim the hand of the affianced. Girl!
Shrink not from me! Give it to God!

Erminia.

'Tis given:

I can not, will not, take it back.

F. John. Refractory! hast thou not dedicated
To God thy heart and soul?

Erminia.

I might have done it

Had never this day shone.

F. John.

And that youth's deeds

Outshone this day, or any day before.

When thou didst give thy hand to the deliverer

Whom God had chosen for us, then didst thou

Accomplish his great work, else incomplete.

I claim to pour his benediction on you

And yours for ever. Much, much misery,

Have I inflicted on the young and brave,

And can not so repent me as I should;

But 'twas in one day only my device

Ever wrought woe on any man alive.

[PAOLUCCI enters.]

Consul. Who enters?

Paolucci.

Who? The bridesman.

Marchesella (embracing him).

My brave friend!

My father's!

Paolucci. Ay, thy grandfather's to boot.

And there was one, about my age, before him,

Sir Stefano, who wore a certain rose,

Radiant with pearls and rubies and pure gold,

Above the horse-tail grappled from the Turk.

Marchesella. We have not in the house that ornament.

Paolucci. I do believe he wears it in the grave.

Countess. There is a sword here bright enough to throw
A lustre on *Stamura*. *Marchesella!*

Marchesella. Kneel, sir!

[*He kneels to ERMINIA.*]

Countess.

Not there.

Marchesella.

Yes, there; what

fitter place?

We know but one high title in the world,
One only set apart for deeds of valour,
And palsied be the hand that ill confers it.
Here is the field of battle ; here I knight thee.

[*Knights him.*

Rise, my compeer ! Teach him his duties, lady,
Toward the poor, the proud, the faith, the sex.

Countess (smiling). Stamura ! would you enter now my service ?

Stamura. Yes, lady, were you wrong'd, this very hour ;
Then might I better earn the bliss I seek.

IÑES DE CASTRO.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. AT CINTRA.

PEDRO. CONSTANTIA.

Constantia. Pleasant must be these groves of Cintra, Pedro!
To one who lately left the Moorish sands:
Everything has its joyance for the eyes
That look from hard-fought bloody fields upon it,
As yours do.

Pedro. Lady! I delight to hear
And see you; so ingenuous, so benign,
So playful!

Constantia. I am then no more *Constantia!*
But *Lady!*

Pedro. You are not the little girl
I left: you have exchanged your childish charms
For others, which require new words, new thoughts,
New gazers.

Constantia. Give me one of them awhile;
Can you not? are you proud? has my mama
Been tutoring you, as she has me?

Pedro. *Constantia!*
I ask from you what no man ever had,
Or askt, in my condition; pity me!

Constantia. O this is then the solemn way to woo!
I have read something like it, since you went,
But never thought it could be near the same.
Here is my hand. You take it not!

* The events in these scenes are not strictly historical.

Pedro. I kiss it.
My life hangs from it, and more lives than one.

Constantia. O no, vain man! I love you very well,
Very sincerely, very tenderly,
For I have seen you often, long together,
Early, and when none knew it; but think not
My life hangs from your ring: you first askt pity,
And fear'd to ask even *that*; you now would grant it,
Perhaps *not* grant it, yet would make me sue.
And came you then before the hour for this?

Pedro. I came before the hour, I must confess,
To be with you some moments more, alone.

Constantia. 'Tis very wrong, I hear, at such a time
Of life: when we are children and are wild
'Tis well enough; but when we are grown sage
(As we are) the whole world cries out upon it.
What now have you been doing all these days?

Pedro. This is the first appointed me for seeing you.

Constantia. O! I know that: my question was amiss:
I always say the very thing one would not.
Alas! I find, and I am sorry for it,
Too young am I to think of serious things.
Surely we might defer them for a year,
By flattering the king and queen a little
And giving them a kiss or two, each of us.
If you should find me but a child in thought,
Or, what is hatefuller, all say, in manner,
And blush for me, my heart must shrivel under it;
For I would never pain the man I love,
And least of all (for that hurts most) would shame him.

Pedro. Sure some kind angel breath'd into your breast
The words on which I live.

Constantia. O! then they pleas'd you!
They were not those that I most hoped to please with.

Pedro. The queen perhaps has not discourst on all
Of my first passion.

Constantia. All? did you tell her?
There were some silly things: I never told her . .
Why should I? we were very young indeed . .
Do people call *that* passion?

Pedro. Have you heard
Perchance of Iñes?

Constantia. Whom? Iñes de Castro?
Not latterly: no one must speak of her.

Pedro. Yes; I must speak of her.

Constantia. They say you liked her;

And so should I have done (she was so good)
If they had let her stay with me : they would not.

Pedro. O sweetest, best Constantia ! she is still
As she was ever . . . saving one sad name.

Constantia. What sad name ?

Pedro.

The betrothed of Don Pedro.

Constantia. How ! faithless man ! betrothed ?

Pedro.

So she was :

I have resigned her.

Constantia.

I resign then you.

What blessing, what prosperity, what peace,
Can rest with perfidy ? she is the same,
You tell me . . . little matters what you tell me . . .
As when you knew her first.

Pedro.

The very same.

Constantia. Mild, beautiful, affectionate, believing ?

Pedro. All.

Constantia. Go then ! ask forgiveness at her feet,
But never hope it here.

Pedro.

Stay, princess !

Constantia.

Go !

The lemon-tyme, geranium, and stiff pinks,
And every tuft in every vase about,
Have lost some leaves while you have been thus speaking ;
So, evil spirits must have entered with you :
And tho' the curtains swell and fall, and tho'
There seems to be a breeze, 'tis not the air ;
What air there was, grows hot and tainted round ;
I scarce can breathe it.

Pedro.

You will hear the whole . . .

Constantia. I never will.

Pedro.

The truth . . .

Constantia.

Where ?

Pedro.

From the queen.

Constantia. The truth, when it left Pedro, left the world.

SCENE II.

PEDRO (*alone in the garden*). Hated, fled, scorn'd, I am at
least set free

From an affiance which the pure of soul
Abhor : such marriage-bed appears bestrewn
With the dank flowers and heavy pall that hung
Around the corse where bloom'd their one delight.
She comes : be strong my heart ! thou'rt at thy proof
For the first time : bear up !

(*To IÑES, who enters.*) Sit here by me,

Under this cedar.

Iñes. Where sit under it?
Its branches push the grass away beneath,
Nor leave it room enough to rise amid them;
Easier it were, methinks, to walk along
And rest on them, they are so dense and broad,
And level as the oars are on Mondego
Until the music beckons them below.

Pedro. Come; I am holding them wide open for thee;
They will close round us.

Iñes. Have you waited long?
Tell me.

Pedro. I've other things to tell thee.

Iñes. What?
Oh! I am very chilly in this shade.

Pedro. Run into the Pavilion then.

SCENE III.

PEDRO and IÑES seated in a Pavilion.

Iñes. Now tell me.
Pedro! your hand and brow are sadly parcht,
And you are out of breath, altho' you walkt
These twenty paces, more than I who ran . . .
And yet you always caught me when we tried.
What would you tell me now, my faithful Pedro!

Pedro. In one word, Iñes! We have ceased to love thee.
Loose me and let me go.

Iñes. Is this your greeting?
This your first morning salutation? turn . . .
Can it be? must I (look at me) believe it?

Pedro. Yes, my sweet . . . yes, my Iñes . . . yes, yes, Iñes!

Iñes. And are you still so generous, O my love,
As to be sorry you have ceast to love me?
To sigh, almost to weep, bending your face
Away from me lest I should grieve to see
A change in it, and in a change a loss!
Take off that hand from above mine then, take it,
I dare not move it from me . . . 'tis the prince's,
And not my Pedro's.

Pedro. I must go.

Iñes. I once
Might ask you why. Let me go.

Pedro. Wouldst thou? whither?

Unfortunate! So, thou resignest me,
Light heartless girl!

Iñes. I would obey! I swore it.

Pedro.

Not yet.

[*Aside.*] Ah! would to God! it were indeed so!

Iñes. Not at the altar yet; but did you not
Force me to say I loved you, ere you went
Against the Moors, telling me you could never
Be half so valiant, half so proud of victory,
Unless I own'd it? Too just punishment!
Why then so long delay'd? We oft have met,
Oft every day, and no day but in smiles,
(O those three happy ones since your return!)
And I had ceas'd to fancy it was wrong,
It seem'd so little like it, and gave *you*
Such pleasure, and such confidence in arms.
Alas! it was unmaidenly! so was it
To leave my arm around your neck; so was it
(And worse) to linger, and not fly at once
For refuge in a cloister, when you prest
My very lips with kisses. You were going,
And my poor heart was faint: I thought no ill;
And you, who might have given me more spirit,
Said nothing: no one image was there near,
Or none I saw, of her, the pure, the blessed,
Who might have chastened me with tender look
Compassionate, and dried the tears of both.

Pedro. I can not bear these reminiscences,
Rather these presences: for they who love
As we have done, have but one day, one hour,
In their whole life, in their whole afterlife,
In earth, heaven, time, eternity.

Iñes.

What said you?

I know not what you said, and yet your words
Seem'd my own to me.

Pedro.

Live! live! thou art young,
Innocent: none shall hurt thee. Think no more
Of that obedience thou wouldst speak about;
'Twas never promist me.

Iñes.

What else is love?

Pedro. O *Iñes!* *Iñes!* *Iñes!* must we two
Know nothing more of what love is, than this!

Iñes. Enough for such as I am . . . ah! too much.
It must not be . . . and yet it may be, sure!
Pedro hath shown me many of my faults,
And now may show me all, and bid me mend them.

Pedro. Forget me, hate me : I am grown ungrateful,
Wild, desperate, the very worst of men.
And (if thou wilt not pity me for saying it)
Most wretched and most wronged.

Hold back thy pity !

I will not have it.

Is this curse enough
For my consent to leave thee ? or what heavier
Would any wish ? even thou ?

Iñes.

Oh tender Pedro !

If you have ceast to love me (very strange
As are your words) I would not argue with you ;
I have no power and you no need of it :
But if you ever fancy in yourself
Such blemishes, then be persuaded by me,
O generous Pedro, you have wronged your nature ;
They are not to be fear'd or thought of in it.
Enough of breasts are open to them, room
Enough in all, and welcome in too many !
They can not enter Pedro's.

Pedro.

Burst, my heart !

Iñes. One only, in your sorrows, we have still ;
Speak and assuage it.

Pedro.

Dost thou bid me ? hear !

Hear me ! reproach me ! spurn me ! but ask nought.

Iñes. Nought will I ask, nought dare I, nought desire I.
Let Watchfulness and Doubt walk slow before
Sad Certainty ; let every fibre throb
Daily and nightly in the dim suspense ;
Only bid Pity hold the light of Truth
Back, nor break suddenly my dream of bliss ;
For fragile is the vase, containing one
Poor simple flower dipt in it by yourself,
And, if you saw it broken at your feet,
You might weep too, ere you could turn away :
Then never say that you have ceast to love me.

Pedro. I must not marry thee.

What answerest thou ?

Iñes. Heaven has decreed it then, O my beloved !
Be calm ! unless I have offended you.

Pedro. I may be calm, no doubt ! a curse on those
Who teach me calmness ! wouldst *thou* teach me it ?

Iñes. Take off the curse : with any pain but that
I would ; tho' others first must teach it *me*.

Pedro (aside). I thought so ! *Others !* What a word is this !
She then has confidants ! she asks their counsel !

She talks to them of me ! tells of my loves,
 My doubts, my fears. What fears have I ? what doubts ?
 She throws my weaknesses before their feet
 To look at, touch, discourse upon, discuss . .
 Now I can leave her . . now I can . . and will.

In three strides I am gone beyond a thought
 Of such a woman . . dear as she was once !
 Pooh ! I misunderstood her, I perceive.

[*To Inés.*

Monks then and priests invade the sanctuary
 Of holiest love, strip down its freshest fruits,
 And chew them dry and call them bad and bitter !
 Could it be thus were dignity in man
 Or chastity in woman, as before ?

We turn tame foxes into our own vineyards
 To yelp the wild ones out ; but they, the wild,
 Come only the more numerous at their noise ;
 And our sleek guardians make the best grapes theirs,
 Biting the fist that drags them back too late.

Inés. Revere our holy Church ! tho' some within
 Have erred, and some are slow to lead us right,
 Stopping to pry when staff and lamp should be
 In hand, and the way whiten underneath.

Pedro. *Inés,* the Church is now a charnel-house,
 Where all that is not rottenness is drowth.
 Thou hast but seen its gate hung round with flowers,
 And heard the music whose serenest waves
 Cover its gulfs and dally with its shoals,
 And hold the myriad insects in light play
 Above it, loth to leave its sunny sides.

Look at this central edifice ! come close !
 Men's bones and marrow its materials are,
 Men's groans inaugurated it, men's tears
 Sprinkle its floor, fires lighted up with men
 Are censers for it ; Agony and Wrath
 Surround it night and day with sleepless eyes ;
 Dissimulation, Terror, Treachery,
 Denunciations of the child, the parent,
 The sister, brother, lover (mark me, *Inés* !)
 Are the peace-offerings God receives from it.

Inés. I tremble ; but betrayers tremble more.
 Now cease, cease, *Pedro* ! Cling I must to somewhat ;
 Leave me one guide, one rest ! Let me love God,
 Alone . . if it must be so !

Pedro. Him alone . .
 Mind ; in him only place thy trust henceforth.
 Thy hands are marble. *Inés* ! and thy looks

Unchangeable, as are the wintry stars
 In their clear brightness. And what pangs have I
 Endured for thee! Gaze, smile at me, sit mute . .
 I merit it . . Woman of songs and satires
 And sermons, thro' the world they point at thee! [*To himself.*
 I spoke of what I suffered: I spoke ill.
 Light as a bubble was the heaviest of it
 To what I now endure. Where was there ever
 Affliction like love buried thus alive,
 And turn'd to hatred by some hellish charm!
 So! then thy lips can move! can open too!
 When they have leisure, will they deign to speak?
Iñes. O Pedro! Pedro! my own agony
 Had cast me down; yours will not let me sink.
 Uncertain man! once tender, now severe,
 Once prodigal of confidence, now prompt
 To snatch it back, rending the heart that held it!
 How much true love my grave will hide from you!
 Let this dry up my tears!

Pedro.

Live! and live happy!

ACT II. AT CINTRA.

BLANCA. PEDRO. IÑES.

Blanca. I, who heard all, have brought her back again.
 Perfidious! where are now the promises
 You made your father, when at my request
 He pardon'd that young sorceress? Are your words
 All spent? Am I unworthy of reply?

Pedro. Madam, no accusation was preferr'd
 Of sorcery; the threat was quite enough.
 When you protested by the saints and martyrs,
 Angels and confessors, Iñes de Castro
 Should soon be charged of sorcery before
 The competent tribunals of the realm,
 Unless she would renounce my plighted vow,
 So firm was my reliance on the word
 Of royalty, so well I understood
 What *competent tribunals* are, I swore
 Upon my knees, never to marry her
 Whom I had sworn to marry. In all this
 Is there no merit to a royal mind?

Blanca. Much; if the vow be kept.

Pedro.

Vows always should be.

Blanca. If made to fathers, made to kings, or saints.

Inés. Your love, your kindest love then separates us ?
Would you not tell me this . . . to make me happy !

Blanca. I would prepare this damsel here to loose
(Allowing time . . . a day, two days, or more,
If need there be . . .) her idle unfit ties.

Pedro. I was more rough, and would have broken them
To save her. Hard as is the alternative,
Rather would I be wanting to my faith
Than see the woman I have loved, and love,
Resign or loosen it. To ask of her
To break my bonds for me, were more than baseness ;
'Twere what the weakest of the base themselves
Disdain, and love and fear alike brush by.

Blanca. Against the course of nature, royal blood
Would mingle with plebeian.

Pedro. None is here.

Blanca. All blood not royal should to royal eyes
Appear so. Fie ! the universe cries out
In condemnation of you.

Pedro. I would answer
With calmness your reproof, O queen, if calmness
In such contingencies were not the thing
The most offensive.

Blanca. Speak : reply you can not.

Pedro. Against the course of nature 'tis impossible
To run (a folly you object to me)
Unless we do a violence to others
Or to ourselves.

But then this universe !
This beadle's house, these rotten fangs from fiends,
These imprecation-wallets, opening
To blast me with fat air !

Blanca. Scoff at the world !

Pedro. Saints do it worse.
The universe of princes,
Lady ! is but a narrow one indeed !
Court, church, and camp, are its three continents,
Nothing is there above, below, around,
But air and froth, now quieter, now stormier.

Blanca. Rare manhood ! thus to argue with a woman !
Rare courtesy ! thus to instruct a queen.

Pedro. Ah ! the distracted will for ever reason ;
Why will not those sometimes who are not so ?

Blanca. What then, unsteady youth, were your resolves ?

Pedro. If she who formerly believed so much,

Iñes, could think me now unworthy of her,
 She soon might bear our severance: what care I
 How many, great, unmerited, my sufferings,
 Be hers but less!

Blanca. To whom now speaks the boy?

Iñes. Those thoughts, that can not rest, spring from his
 heart;

And, as they spring, fall into it again,
 Like some pure fountain-water, where none heeds
 The rift it rises from.

[*To PEDRO, laying her hand on his.*

Was it to me,

Or to yourself, or to the queen, you spoke?

Pedro. In Nature's voice I spoke alone with Nature.

[*To the QUEEN.*

Madam! protect this innocent sweet girl!
 I, who would have abandoned her, implore it!

Iñes. Too generous soul! O Pedro! O my prince!

Let the unworthiest of your father's vassals
 Clasp, on the ground, your knee!

Blanca. How! in my presence!

Leaning thy forehead on thy keeper's knee!

Pedro (raising IÑES). Rise!

[*To the QUEEN.*

Madam, I have not yet learnt

Castilian.

My royal father has conferr'd on me,
 For my poor humble service, no such title.
 I am but Pedro, prince of Portugal.
 Towns, provinces, have been entrusted to me,
 And kept; but never have I undertaken
 The weighty charge, to be a woman's keeper.

Iñes. Crave pardon of the queen!

Blanca. Of me? what need?

His father will forgive him at my suit;
 He loves him, and hath shown it in the choice
 He has approved and sanctioned, of his wife.

Iñes. O happy father! happy Portugal!

And, whatsoe'er befall thee, happy Iñes!

Blanca. Has the audacious chatterer ceast at last?

Constantia, sir, is royal, is your equal,
 Is your superior.

Pedro. Who is not? that wears

The graces of her sex, the goodness of it,
 The mildness, and sometimes the pitying tears.
 Constantia knows my passion.

Blanca. Knows your passion?
 What! before marriage? Yes, yes, you are right:
 I told her of it when I gave it her,
 How 'twas devoted to her. Prove my words,
 If loyalty and knighthood are within you.

Pedro. Strong the appeal: and any other words
 The queen might dictate.

Blanca. These will do quite well;
 Confirm them to my daughter: that is all:
 Say them in your own way . . . with some few more,
 As princes do, by precedent . . . or not . . .
 I would drop any form to make you easy,
 And put this boyish fancy out of mind.

Iñes. I must not throw myself again before you,
 I must not hear those royal words again,
 They hurt you so, they almost made you angry.
 Ah! how you blush at being wroth so soon!

But let me pray, and let me once more move you,
 Be duteous! be obedient! O how lovely
 Is the young princess who expects your hand!

Blanca. Does it require an effort to espouse
 The princess of Castille?

Pedro. Nor to espouse,
 Nor to abandon whom we *should* espouse,
 Is thought an effort in the court of kings.

Blanca. Plebeian soul! ill-sorted with its state!

Iñes. Into what errors have I led you, Pedro!
 The princess may retrieve you, she alone.

Blanca (seizing IÑES). Come then . . . resist not, think not,
 hang not back . . .

Along with me! There is no other way
 To give him freedom. We may find for you
 A match more equal and less perilous.
 I will adorn your nuptials with my presence,
 To satisfy your pride, and his, unworthy!
 No earthly thing is wanting to the bridegroom.
 He has estate, youth, person, rank, court, favour . . .
 What! thankless, graceless, uncompliant girl,
 Will nothing serve you under royalty?

Iñes. O were there none on earth! I then were happy.

Blanca. Abomination! treason! heresy!
 My duty now compels me. Call the guard.

Pedro. Forbear, forbear, justly offended queen!

Iñes. Well may you blush who never blusht for me
 Before! I lost my senses when I said it.
 I may love God; I may not love *you*, Pedro!

And hence the worst and wildest wish that ever
 Distraction wrencht from passion . . for my warmth
 To draw the sun ('twas nothing less) from heaven.
 O what were Portugal, or earth without you !
 Inanimate, or trampled, or distraught,
 Or self-opprest, like one in wicked slumber.
 Reign, bravest Pedro, teaching first obedience,
 Be everything that kings have ever been,
 Unless they should have loved !

O that, before
 We part, I must not touch those cheeks with mine,
 To catch their modesty and beauteousness !

Blanca. Mad impudence ! am I then but a fly
 Or bird, or vacant unobservant air,
 That every wish should strip itself before me ?
 Thy wanton ardour, girl, shall have its range
 Elsewhere.

Iñes. Most gracious lady ! let me follow ;
 I am unworthy of the hand that leads me.

Blanca. That drags thee to thy doom, if thou resist.
 Choose ; death or marriage !

Iñes. Marriage ? never, never !
 Help me, O help me, Pedro ! not to fly,
 Not to resist, but to obey in all
 Save that one thing where life and death are one,
 Of that speak not, tho' you should speak from heaven.

Pedro. What can I ? Wilt thou claim me ? I am thine :
 One fire, before the populace, burns both.

Blanca. Atheist and heretic ! shame, shame o'erwhelm thee !
 A prince of Portugal in robes of flame !
 Before the populace ! and own his fault ! [To IÑES.
 Come, come along ! these horrors must not be.
 God, Sant Iago, and Castille, forbid !

Iñes. Grant me, O queen, a cloister.
Blanca. With the pure ?
 The consecrated ? the resigned ?

Iñes. A grave
 Then grant me ! there the fit and unfit meet.
Blanca. I will grant that which girls like thee wish more,
 And pray for less aloud : my word is given :
 The bridegroom waits : thou'rt his ere the last mass,
 In time for dinner at his father's house.
 Haste ; do not keep the valets round the board
 To drive away the flies which mar your feast,
 Nor make the elder guests more grave than age
 Has made them, that their wine grows warm apace.

Iñes (to PEDRO). O then you can not save me!

Pedro.
If my own life can do it.

Save I will,

Blanca. How should that?

Iñes. No branch so leafless but it gives a shade
To some poor insect at some hour of day.
Many has that sword slain who wisht to live,
And there was glory from it; was it then
Because they wisht to live that there was glory
In stripping them of life? are friendly deeds
Less glorious than unfriendly? is less brave
The blow that liberates than the force that binds?

Pedro. What say'st thou?

Iñes. I dare neither say nor do,
Yet wish, and more than wildest love e'er wisht.

Pedro (to himself). I will not ask again, lest one desire,
As ever, come between us and seize both. [To IÑES.

What thou hast spoken of inanimate things
Levels me with them, nay, casts me beneath.
Lo! here am I, and can not lend protection
To those whom God's right hand placed at my side
Rather to strengthen and admonish me,
And whom their virtue should have rais'd above it.

Blanca. Virtue! ay, where obedience and religion
Are wanting, there comes virtue! by my faith,
Never a word on earth I like so ill:
Who taught you it?

Pedro. The word I have forgotten
Who taught me: if you ask or heed who taught
The thing, behold her here! and here the heart
Whereon, beneath her image, 'tis engraven:
Drown'd, drown'd are all my senses in deep love.

Blanca. Blessed are they who walk in innocence,
And fear the Lord, and only know his saints,
And only do his will! The arts of Hell,
The powers of darkness, be they far from me,
From you, my son, and all our royal house!
I would not even mention them, lest woe
Fall upon some one at the searching sound.
Treason, rebellion, wishes undisguised,
Bold boisterous exclamations, not against
One king, and him the very best on earth,
Our natural lord and master, but against
The form, the power, the name, of royalty,
Royalty! God's appointed, God's own work,
God's own resemblance. Need we charge of sorcery?

You are the witness, prince! I would hurt none.
 You on your oath must answer to our liege
 For the state's weal: and let us drop the rest.

Pedro. Spare her! or, by the Christ that died for me,
 I die for her, and on this sword, before you.

Blanca. Abstain, rash youth!

Pedro. Merciless queen, abstain!

Iñes. O call none merciless! all *must* have mercy;
 All need it.

Blanca. Hold thy peace! art thou in church,
 Profane one! or are words like these for thee!

Pedro. Forgive her! swear upon the crucifix
 That you will never urge against her aught
 Endangering life, or liberty, or fame,
 Then give me to the axe or to the stake
 As best beseems you.

Blanca. You will then obey?

Pedro. Swear; due obedience follows.

Blanca. To my lips

I lift my blessed Lord, and call his name
 In witness; not a thought of ill is left
 Within my sinful breast against the life,
 Or liberty, or fame, of that young maid,
 Iñes de Castro.

Iñes. Gracious queen! kind Pedro!
 To think of me!

I too have courage . . strength . .

Blanca. What confidence! what impropriety!
 She falls upon my knees: she faints: 'tis nothing;
 Call . .

Pedro. Let my arms, for the last time, sustain her!

ACT III. AT CINTRA.

KING ALFONSO and QUEEN BLANCA.

Blanca. She hath been known to favour the suggestion
 That he is wiser, handsomer, and younger
 (We know what that word points to) than your majesty.

Alfonso. There is irreverence in it. Well; but sons
 May be, nay, must be, younger than their fathers.

Blanca. O well-pois'd thought! how kindly! how con-
 siderate!

I am no enemy of hers; we both
 Agree, the wily Iñes hath her charms;

God grant they all be innocent, they all
Be such as holy church may countenance,
Better than it can do her foul alliance.

Alfonso. The church can give us purity of life,
Devotion and obedience, and strong miracles
To make us stedfast in our true belief.

Blanca. The Devil may prevail.

Alfonso. No, no ; not he ;
I will not have it so.

Blanca. Against the church
I did not say, but against us frail creatures.

Alfonso. Ay, let him stick but there, and small harm done.

Blanca. Thus, thus it is ; all pious men are wise :
None other.

Alfonso. Not a mother's son of them.

Blanca. How shall we bear to think then of those spells,
Those conjurations and those incantations ?
Yes, cross yourself until your coat be tatters,
It will not countervail them.

Alfonso. Who's at work ?

Blanca. Iñes.

Alfonso. And did she write her name in blood ?

Blanca. She would ; and even in yours.

Alfonso. Bad ! bad ! but mine

Would not be half so wicked as her own :
The Devil would find savour in that sop,
And kiss a seal so precious ten times over.

Blanca. He has already.

Alfonso. How ! you do not say so !

Blanca. I say it ; I am sure of it ; and they
Imitate that abomination.

Alfonso. Who ?

Iñes and Pedro ? Ten times over ?

Blanca. Twenty.

Alfonso. God help him !

Blanca. O my liege ! what word was that !

Alfonso. It must be lust.

Blanca. Worse.

Alfonso. Even than lust ? I've thought
Upon it much, and the more years I think
Upon it, worse and worse it seems to me.

Blanca. Odious ! most odious ! Princes thus descend !

Alfonso. Yet, Blanca, they are young ! young too were we !

Blanca (aside). I have no patience.

Still the charms of youth
Surround your majesty.

Alfonso. I have been younger.
Blanca. Chroniclers may assert it.
Alfonso. I am hale.
Blanca. Ah! there are powers that sap all human strength!
 Even words can do it, words, the froth of wishes
 Boiling in venom.
Alfonso. Saints above! would Iñes
 Compass my death? that beauteous one? she, Iñes?
Blanca. Look to her.
Alfonso. Do you think so?
Blanca. God avert it!
Alfonso. Nay, if it come to that, I must protect
 With all my strength of courage and of wisdom
 My royal house most royally against her,
 And call upon the Church to stand and guard us.

ACT IV. AT COIMBRA.

PEDRO. IÑES.

Pedro. Iñes! we have not loved in vain: this day
 Rewards thy many sufferings for my sake,
 And places our sweet children where they ought
 To stand, in their own brightness.

Once I said
The king will do it: 'twas some heavenly voice
 Prompted my words; yet my heart own'd them not,
 And I was slow to speak and thou to hear
 The comfort this hour brings.

Iñes. The holy Father
 Sanctioned our vows, the bishop joined our hands,
 In vain, if the parental blessing on us
 Be wanting.

Many are the tears we shed
 For poor Constantia, when upon the brink
 Of death she took our hands and claspt them hard,
 And sighed, *Be never sundered, faithful pair!*
 Not even this avails us: when the king
 Calls us his children, and the queen too hers,
 Then, and then only, are the rites complete.

Pedro. Sweet was the friend thou gavest me; more sweet
 The friend she gave; heroic was her gift,
 More than heroic thine; she loved me well,
 I loved her only that she loved me so:

Thou wert my soul's delight from the first day
 My eyes had opened on thee, and thy life
 Kept mine on earth but to watch over it.
 Now it is safe.

Something yet troubles thee ;
 What can it be ?

Iñes. I wonder why the children
 Are not yet brought to us. The king and queen
 Will soon be here ; and we without the flowers
 To offer them !

Pedro. The fault is mine. A child,
 Now almost four years old, remarks, remembers.

Iñes. Surely he should.

Pedro. Humiliation ? no.
 He shall not scorn *his* father, nor curse *mine*.
 What I must do, *Iñes*, I do for thee . . .
 Hard else the service ; hard ! ay, unperformed.
 The king will see the children in the park,
 (He must ride through it) and let that suffice.

ACT V. AT COIMBRA.

BLANCA. PEDRO. IÑES.

Blanca. Don Pedro ! I rejoice that our liege lord
 Hath well considered what becomes his house,
 And, in his tenderness of heart, embraced
 This lady, to whom on my part I pray
 Heaven grant its loving mercies.

Pedro. I await
 The presence of my father, to pour forth
 Whatever gratitude, whatever zeal,
 Soldier or son may offer : late last night
 His orders came that we await him here.

Blanca. The king my husband met before the castle
 The children who (they told him) are his son's,
 And he was taken with, I know not which,
 The elder, or the younger, and would fain
 Have them with him and talk with them and love them,
 And may perhaps in time provide for them.

Pedro. Madam, when they are stronger, their own swords
 Will do it.

Iñes (apart). O ! hush ! Pedro ! is this right
 After such kindness ?

Blanca. But until they *are*
Stronger, and carry swords (which may do harm),
Shall we not look to them, and merit thanks?

Pedro. God grant it!

Blanca. All must give up some designs,
Some wishes too long nurst, some ill-grown thoughts.
After five years many would not repine
To yield a mistress, but would bless the eyes
That winkt upon the fault, like mine, like his,
The fond indulgent father's, the wise king's.

Pedro. I have no mistress, save whom holy church
And love as holy gave me. Gifts like her
Heaven seldom gave, and never man resigned.

Iñes. Surely no longer is there any cause
For separation.

Pedro. Cause be there or not,
No power on earth can separate us now.

Blanca. He who permitted can release your bonds;
To him belongs all power in earth and heaven.

Pedro. Hath God none left? Have vows and sacraments
No force in them?

Blanca. God leaves this nether world
To his vicegerent.

Pedro. So it seems!

Blanca. Then bow
Obedient to the rod.

Pedro. Is there no time
When rods shall shed their knots, and we arise
From under them, and when the bloody hand
Shall drop them, shall consent to clench our gold
In preference, and be kist on the outside
For form's sake, letting us stand up and walk?

Blanca. I understand not this opprobrious speech.
We are vile worms: how can we stand erect?

Pedro. God made us not vile worms.

Blanca. We make ourselves
None other, by our passions.

Pedro. Not by those
The Church hath sanctified.

Blanca. For its own ends.

Pedro. Ay, truly!

Blanca. For its peace . . .

Pedro. And plenteousness.

Blanca. God's house should be well stored.

Pedro. God's law well kept.
His house be it his to keep, his law be it ours.

Blanca. Assertor of illegibilities
In law, the sense whereof but one can tell,
No longer do I wonder that my poor
Constantia died so soon : died ere the crown
Circled her fine black hair! . . .

Pedro. . . . And King Alfonso

Was gathered to his fathers!

Blanca. Miscreant!

Who thought of that?

Pedro. Worthy was your Constantia

Of any crown; but none (had life been spared)
Could have been hers before my father left it.

Blanca. And shall that creature there, that half-espous'd,
Wear it instead?

Pedro. That creature there descends
Of royal lineage; and from her hath sprung
A royal lineage not below the past.
Adversity hath nurst it, and just Heaven
Placed it, you say, beneath my father's smile.

Ines. Nothing is wanting now, most gracious queen!
Beside your blessing.

Blanca. Curses on the brood . . .
. . . I had well-nigh been prompted to exclaim
Under my wrongs . . . but wrongs we all must bear.

Ines. If any of them seem to rise from me,
Punish me, O kind lady! and point out
How I may expiate my offence at last.

Blanca. De Castro! Set not thou thy heart upon
The crown! it may fall from thee; nay, it shall.

Ines. For crowns I care not.

Blanca (to PEDRO). Carest thou for crowns?

Pedro. I value that of Portugal above
All earthly things, saving my faith and sword.

Blanca. Above this woman?

Pedro. On this woman rests
My faith, and o'er her pillow hangs my sword.
The crown is, and God grant it long may be,
Another's; and no thought can dwell thereon
Of mine, but hopes of love from him who wears it,
A subject's, soldier's, son's obedience.

Blanca (an Officer brings a letter). Prove it: the speech was
spoken opportunely. [Reading.

"She spoils me! what would one much better do?

Give me my own mama! I'll run away . . .

I'll never have another . . . very good ones

Would only make me cry the more for mine."

Patience! I have no patience for his folly. [Reads on.
 "Beauty."

Young things are always beautiful.

"Such innocence."

Can they be otherwise?

"Like me a little."

Ha! there lies the spell.

Doating old man! I'll break it, if I live.

Like thee?

Constantia's children may become so:
 Legitimately born, them sponsor kings
 Have held, and heard their titles at the font.

Pedro. Madam, the former words you spoke less loud:
 They may not have concern'd me; but these last
 Strike at my honour.

Since the nuptial rites
 First held together those whom love had joined,
 None have been ever holier than were ours.
 The pontiff, to whose power you have appeal'd,
 Ordered the best of bishops, him of Guarda,
 To join our hands and bless us; which he did;
 Shedding the tears that virtuous old men shed
 On those whom they think virtuous, both when joy
 Showers from above and when grief strikes them low.

Blanca. The pontiff did it lest a scandal lie
 Against the Church: he was deceiv'd: some doubts
 Have risen in his mind, which you shall hear,
 Of this young person who was named your wife.

Pedro. Named! by the name of God! she is my wife,
 And shall be so for ever! Earth, Hell, Rome,
 Shall never separate us.

Courage! girl!
 Thou hast heard worse from her.

Blanca. And worse shalt hear.
 Some time ago, when we first met at Cintra,
 I was too tender-hearted; so the king
 Assured me: now he leaves me my own way
 To follow.

Iñes. When he comes . . .

Blanca. He comes not hither.

Pedro. Can kings deceive?

Blanca. No, they can not deceive,
 But they can promise and observe the promise
 Or drop it, as they will.

Who shall controul
 Or question them?

Pedro. Their God.

Blanca. God hath approved
From Rome (if you will read it) our resolves.

Pedro. Madam, I read not anything from Rome
That violates our sacraments. [*Holding a paper.*]

Blanca. Rome made
And can unmake them, and does every day.

Pedro. Only where kings are rich and nations weak.

Blanca. Some deference must be paid in solid gold,
Some in obedience: the more weighty part
We undertake, the lighter is for you.

Pedro. Rare image, by my troth, is this of Heaven!
Odin and Thor shattered the bones, and drank
Of beer and mead what the crackt skull could hold;
Too generous were their mighty hands to flch
The purse, had any purse been in the way.
The bridge of Mahomet has no shops upon it:
The very Jew eats up his meal morose
Apart from God's, nor robs us in God's name.

Blanca. Who would have thought this cursed sect should
count
Among its friends a prince of Portugal!

Pedro. There are no sects in subjects: all are one;
One protects all.

The world will never flourish
Under crown'd priests or water-sprinkling kings.

Blanca. Oh horrible! O blasphemy! O lust
Of change in princes. You would fain become
(Tho' prince) what people call, I think, a patriot:
Hard husky thing with little kernel in it,
And bitter as the water of hell-streams.

Pedro. No, Madam! I abjure the uncleanness
Of name so prostituted. Prince I am,
And claim my birthright, and wish others theirs.
I am less changeful.

Iñes! do not weep!

I want thy word.

Iñes. I have no word to speak,
Now every one I utter gives offence.

Pedro. I am then fond of change? Say this against me
And thou wilt not offend.

Iñes. O! may God love me
As does my Pedro! may at length the queen
Pardon me as God pardon'd me, who made him!

Blanca. . . . Over the grave of my dear child!

Ay, sob!

Hide thy white face! pull thy loose curls around,
 Exactly like . . . I know not what they're like,
 They are so frightful, tossing here and there
 By their own rustic untamed springiness,
 Even when thou movest neither head nor body.
 There's nothing royal, nothing noble, in it.
 Now am I forced to say what shocks my soul
 In utterance . . . first because it places thee
 Too near our royal house, and then because
 It covers it with incest. Can I speak
 The words I would? Speak them I must; for these,
 These only, can strike down thy lofty hopes,
 And show thee what abyss, what hell, of guilt
 Lies under to engulf thee. Didst thou not
 Stand with Don Pedro here and hold the prince
 Don Luis with him at the sacrament
 Of baptism? By the saints in Paradise!
 Thou art his sister in the Church's eye.

Pedro. The Church had wiped, I fancied, from her eye
 This grain of dust; I gave the kerchief for it;
 Many, and somewhat worse, she throws in ours.

Blanca. Arguing with him who argues against God,
 As thou dost, were a folly: this at least,
 Iñes! is not among thy many sins:
 Yet little as thou hast deserved of me,
 I make thee what amends thy broken marriage
 (For such in courtesy I will express it)
 Admits of.

Pedro. I am then, it seems, to die,
 Since nothing but the stroke of death can break it.

Iñes. Sweet husband! shall false dangers overshadow
 Whom true and great ones blazed upon and guided?

Pedro. And shall these false ones make thee weep? did
 those?

Bear up, my Iñes! bear up bravely, girl!
 We have been happy: happy we shall be.
 Thou seest me not withering with age, cast down
 By weight of wrongs, consumed by grief, distraught
 By envy and ambition, worse than one
 Whom penal horses sever limb from limb,
 Nor, what were worse than all, bereft of thee;
 For Heaven will give me thoughts and views of Iñes,
 As Iñes gave me, in this world, of Heaven.

Blanca. Heaven gives wide views, very wide views, to
 many.

I have my doubts. Rainy-eyed girls see double,
Toss on two pillows, and drop tears on each ;
I would say nothing more : I may be wrong ;
But other names than Pedro may have crept
Among the curtains in Don Pedro's house.

Ines. O may they ever ! glorious names ! blest saints
Of Paradise ! have ye not watcht my sleep ?
Have ye not given me thoughts of him, and hopes,
And visions, when I prayed you to protect
Him and his children, and that gracious queen
Who sees me not aright thro' love of him,
Wishing him loftier aims and brighter joys.

Blanca. My doubts now darken ; do not thine, at this
Evasion ?

Pedro. O my Iñes ! sure the Blest
Are the more blest to share thy love with me,
And I to share it, as I do, with them :
Alike to me art thou immaculate.

Blanca. How the man raves ! no stain, no spot in her !
Immaculate ! Beware, repeat the word
With those unholy lips, call her that name
Which only one of mortal race had ever.

Pedro. Lady ! that one was meek no less than pure.

Blanca. So am I too, who suffer all this wrong,
This violence, this scoffing, this deceit,
From one like her, false, loathsome, dull, low-born.
Others know all ; I know not half, nor would.

Pedro. Hot lolling tongues bespatter fairest names
With foulest slurs : black shows not upon black.

Blanca. Well ! let us hope ! all may be right at last.
There are bad minds, Don Pedro, in the world,
As you must have observed.

Pedro. A glimpse or two.

Blanca. I did then wisely when I warn'd you both,
Tho' 'tis a thankless office, as most are
Where we consume our days in doing good.

[*PEDRO goes to the window.*]

Pedro. Ha ! there they stand below, agape for me.
One walkt but half the length of the house-front
And turn'd again, and askt his fellow slave
(I do believe, for they have hungry scrips)

"*When will the prey be ours ? and the prey's price ?*"
Their plumes and brims ill hide them, tho' they keep
As near as may be under us : perhaps
'Twere well to call three more and better men.
Pacheco is too lank ; the shrewd Coello

And spruce Gonzales would not like their doublets
To have another slash in them.

Blanca. What mean
These foul insinuations ?

Pedro. What mean they
Under my window ?

Blanca. Your own good ; the king's
True service.

Pedro. Let them enter then.

Blanca. This room ?

Pedro. Yea, and within one pace of their king's son ;
Covered ; with dirk and rapier ; but in front.

Iñes. Escape, O dearest Pedro !

Pedro. He who dies
Escapes ; and some shall beat the path before.

I would not willingly try any flight ;
The only one I know, the only one
Where Honour can go with me, will be mine
Whatever hour I choose.

Blanca. Most heathenish !
To talk of Honour and of Death so lightly !

Pedro. Madam, we may lose one, but not the other ;
Therefore we need not mind it.

Blanca. Not when Hell
Opens before us ?

Pedro. Hell too we may close
And its enormous portals, with less effort
Than infants push aside ungrateful food.
We have but to maintain our sense of right,
Which of all senses is the pleasantest,
And which must bear most violence ere expell'd.

Blanca. I understand not a fantastic speech
Appliant to no person, to no purport.
I will speak plainer ; and I speak to both ;
Obey !

It seems not decent that men's hands
Should touch with little gentleness, should lead
Compulsively, young women who have stood
Behind and near the daughter of Castille.
Long-suffering is my merit, if the grace
Of God vouchsafes me one : but oaths of fealty
On all are binding, and on queens the most.
My conscience hath upbraided me severely
For not disclosing to our king the part
Whereto (in tears I own it) I was privy,
Against his crown and dignity.

Come now!

Hear reason, dona Inês! I no more
Urge any choice which may displease you both.

Pedro. Displease us? urge a choice?

Blanca. We must avoid
Scandal at least.

There are formalities;
Mere abjuration now of marriage-rites,
And nothing more than living separate,
One in a cloister, t'other in a camp:
The very choice the brave and chaste all make.

Pedro. Ay, by the Saints! and some perhaps too soon
Shall find my choice made firmly.

Blanca. Now delay
Were madness, pardon perjury: such threats,
Are traitorous and parricidal too.

[*She calls from the window.*

Coelho! Diego! with your band upstairs . . .
With your whole band . . . two timid women wait . . .
Your queen commands . . . your king . . . your friend the
bridegroom . . .

Force! murder!

[*To PEDRO.*

Stop me? hold me? grasp my wrist?
Audacious! and let that foul fiend escape?

Inês (just out of the door). Good soldier! I am not escaping
from you . . .

Push me not back! *that* was not the command . . .

Strike! you must act no otherwise . . . let fall

This halbert, or I run from under it . . .

The word is given . . . 'twas the queen gave it . . . strike,
Irresolute!

Pedro. What fell?

Blanca.

Where is she?

Pedro.

Fled.

Blanca. Hold me not; pray me not; I will pursue . . .

Pedro. The guard hath stopt her.

Blanca.

At the door?

Pedro.

With force

More than is manly, thrusting her against it.

Ho! Inês! art thou hurt? speak! art thou speaking?

What sobbest thou, my love! is then my name

Uncall'd upon in any grief of thine?

Where is she?

Ho! throw open, sentinel,

This door.

Blanca. Stand further off . . . he does his duty . . .

Further back yet . . . have you no decency!
 To tread upon her blood! it runs thro' fast,
 And will ('tis to be fear'd) leave marks behind.
 Who, hearing your insensibility,
 Will pity you?

Pedro. None! none!

Iñes is dead!

My father! you are childless! fare you well!

Unbar the door! [*Aloud to the sentry.*

Command him, madam! [*To BLANCA.*

Who

Shall keep me here, while steel is in my grasp
 And vengeance strengthens it and justice guides it?

Blanca. Sentry, unbar! [*Looking at the corpse.*

The scene quite saddens me.

'Twas her own fault, rash child! God's will be done!

IPPOLITO DI ESTE.*

Ippolito. Now all the people follow the procession
 Here may I walk alone, and let my spirits
 Enjoy the coolness of these quiet aisles.
 Surely no air is stirring; every step
 Tires me; the columns shake, the ceiling fleets,
 The floor beneath me slopes, the altar rises.
 Stay! here she stopt: what grace! what harmony!
 It seem'd that every accent, every note
 Of all the choral music, breath'd from her:
 From her celestial airiness of form
 I could have fancied purer light descended.
 Between the pillars, close and wearying,
 I watcht her as she went: I had rusht on;
 It was too late; yet, when I stopt, I thought
 I stopt full soon: I cried, *Is she not there?*
 She *had* been: I had seen her shadow burst
 The sunbeam as she parted: a strange sound,
 A sound that stupified and not aroused me,
 Fill'd all my senses: such was never felt
 Save when the sword-girt Angel struck the gate,
 And Paradise wail'd loud and closed for ever.
 She should return; the hour is past away.
 How can I bear to see her (yet I will)
 Springing, she fondly thinks, to meet the man
 I most abhor, my father's base-born son,
 Ferrante!

* Ferrante and Giulio were brothers, by the father's side, to the Duke Alfonso and the Cardinal Ippolito di Este. The cardinal deprived Ferrante of his eyes for loving the same object as his Eminence, and because she had praised the beauty of them.

Rosalba (*entering*). What! I called him? in my haste
To languish at his beauty, to weigh down
His eyelids with my lips for gazing on me:
Surely I spoke the name, and knew it not
Until it bounded back and smote me so!

Ippolito. Curses upon them both!

[*Advancing toward her.*]

Welcome, sweet lady!

Rosalba. Lord Cardinal! you here? and unattended?

Ippolito. We wait the happy lover, do we not?

Rosalba. Ferrante then betrayed the secret to you!

And are you come to honour with your presence . . .

Ippolito. Has the Duke sign'd the contract?

Rosalba. For what bride?

Ferrante writes *Ferrante* plain enough;

And I do think, altho' I once or twice

Have written it instead of mine, at last

I am grown steadier, and could write *Rosalba*.

Ippolito. Sport not with one your charms have cast too low.

Rosalba. Sport not with one your hand would raise too high.

Ippolito. Again that taunt! the time may come, *Rosalba*,
When I could sanctify the blissful state
I have aspired to.

Rosalba. Am not I mere ice?

Show not I girlish forwardness, the fears

Of infancy, the scruples of old age?

Have not you said so? and said more . . . you hate them?

How could you bear me, or what wish from me?

Ippolito. That which another will not long retain.

Rosalba. You know him little, and me less.

Ippolito.

I know

Inconstancy in him.

Rosalba. And what in me?

Ippolito. Intolerance for his betters.

Rosalba. Ignorance,

But not intolerance of them, is my fault.

Ippolito. No?

Rosalba. Call it thus, and cast it on the rest.

Ippolito. Some are there whose close vision sees but one
In the whole world, and would not see another
For the whole world, were that one out of it.

Rosalba. Are there some such? O may they be my friends!
O how, before I know them, I do love them!

Ippolito. After no strife, no censure, no complaint,
Have not your tears been seen, when you have left him,
Thro' tediousness, distaste, dislike, and grief

(Ingenuous minds must feel it, and may own it)
That love, so rashly promist, would retire,
Hating exaction, circumvention, bonds?

Rosalba. Such grief is yet unknown to me. I know
All tears are not for sorrow : many swell
In the warm depths of gratitude and bliss ;
But precious over all are those that hang
And tremble at the tale of generous deeds.
These he relates when he might talk, as you do,
Of passion : but he sees my heart, he finds
What fragrance most refreshes it.

How high,
O Heaven ! must that man be, who loves, and who
Would still raise others higher than himself
To interest his beloved !

All my soul
Is but one drop from his, and into his
Falls, as earth's dew falls into earth again.

Ippolito. Yet would it not be wise to trust a friend
Able to counsel in extremes and straits ?

Rosalba. Is it not wise in darkness and in storm
To trust the wave that lashes us, and pray
Its guidance on the rocks whereto it tends ?
I have my guide, Lord Cardinal ! he alone
Is ship and pilot to me, sea and star :
Counsel from others, knowing him, would be
Like worship of false gods ; in me no less
Than profanation and apostasy.

Ippolito. We may retire ; he comes not here to-day.

Rosalba. Then will I not retire, but lay my head
Upon the feet of any pitying saint
Until he comes, altho' it be to-morrow.

Ippolito. To-morrow he may fail : the sovran will
By rescript has detained and must delay him.

Rosalba. Lead, lead me to Ferrante.

Ippolito. Were I worthy.

Rosalba. Proud cruel man ! that bitter sneer bodes ill.
May not I see him ?

Ippolito. He may not see *you*.

Rosalba. O let him ! well my memory can supply
His beauteous image ; I can live on love
Saturate, like bees with honey, long drear days ;
He must see *me*, or can not rest ; I can.

SECOND PART.

IPPOLITO, FERRANTE, and GIULIO, in prison.

Ippolito. Reasons of state, I fear, have dictated
This something like severity ; God grant
Here be no heresy: do both avow it,
Staring in silence at discovery ?

Giulio. No order forced me hither ; I am come
To share my brother's fate, what'er it be,
And mitigate his sufferings.

Ippolito. May they cease !

Giulio. Those words would have dissolved them into air,
Spoken but twenty furlongs from these bars.

Ippolito. I would do much to serve you ; but my faith
And my allegiance have two other lords,
The duke my brother, and the pope my God.
Ferrante then says nothing ?

Ferrante. He well knows
Thy hatred and its cause.

Ippolito. Why should I hate you, . . .
My father's son, they say ?

Ferrante. *They say !* His blood
Runs in these veins, pure, for pure blood was hers
Who loved the youthful lover, and who died
When falser vows estranged the matchless prince.

Ippolito. He saw his error.

Ferrante. All men do when age
Bends down their heads, or gold shines in their way.

Ippolito. Altho' I would have helpt you in distress,
And just removed you from the court awhile,
You call'd me tyrant.

Ferrante. Called thee tyrant ? I ?
By Heaven ! in tyrant there is something great
That never was in thee. I would be killed
Rather by any monster of the wild
Than choakt by weeds and quicksands, rather crusht
By maddest rage than clay-cold apathy.
Those who act well the tyrant, neither seek
Nor shun the name ; and yet I wonder not
That thou repeatest it, and wishest me ;
It sounds like power, like policy, like courage,
And none who calls thee tyrant can despise thee.
Go, issue orders for imprisonment,
Warrants for death : the gibbet and the wheel,
Lo ! the grand boundaries of thy dominion !

O what a mighty office for a minister
 (And such Alfonso's brother calls himself)
 To be the scribe of hawkers! Man of genius!
 The lanes and allies echo with thy works.

Giulio. Ah! do not urge him; he may ruin you;
 He may pursue you to the grave.

Ferrante. He dares not:
 Look at his collar! see the saint he wears!
 The amber saint may ask too much for that.

Ippolito. Atheist! thy scoffs encourage every crime,
 And strip thee, like a pestilence, of friends:
 Theirs is the guilt to march against the law,
 They mount the scaffold, and the blow is thine.

Ferrante. How venom burnishes his adder's crest!
 How eloquent on scaffolds and on laws!
 If such a noisome weed as falsehood is
 Give frothy vigour to a worm like thee,
 Crawl, eat, drink, sleep upon it, and farewell.

Ippolito (to GIULIO). Take you the sentence, and God be with
 both! [Goes.]

Giulio. What sentence have we here?

Ferrante. Unseal and read it.

Giulio (reading). Of sight! of sight! of sight!

Ferrante. Would you escape,
 My gentle Giulio? Run not thus around
 The wide light chamber, press not thus your brow
 Against the walls, with your two palms above.
 Seek you the door then? you are uncondemned
 To lose the sight of one who is the bloom
 And breath of life to you: the bolts are drawn
 On me alone. You carry in your breast
 Most carefully our brother's precious gift:
 Well, take it anywhere, but do not hope
 Too much from any one. Time softens rocks,
 And hardens men.

Giulio. Pray then our God for help.

Ferrante. O my true brother, Giulio! why thus hang
 Around my neck and pour forth prayers for me?
 Where there are priests and kinsmen such as ours,
 God hears not, nor is heard. I am prepared
 For death.

Giulio. Ah! worse than death may come upon you,
 Unless Heaven interpose.

Ferrante. I know the worst,
 And bear one comfort in my breast that fire
 And steel can ne'er force from it: she I love

Will not be his, but die as she hath lived.
Doubt you? that thus you shake the head and sigh.

Giulio. Far other doubt was mine: even this shall cease.

Ferrante. Speak it.

Giulio. I must: God pardon me!

Ferrante. Speak on.

Giulio. Have we not dwelt in friendship from our birth,
Told the same courtier the same tale of joy,
And pointed where life's earliest thorn had pierced
Amid the sports of boyhood, ere the heart
Hath aught of bitter or unsound within?

Ferrante. We have indeed.

Giulio. Has my advice been ill?

Ferrante. Too often ill-observed, but always good.

Giulio. Brother, my words are not what better men
Would speak to you; and yet my love, I think,
Must be more warm than theirs can ever be.

Ferrante. Brother's, friend's, father's, when was it like yours?

Giulio. Which of them ever said what I shall say?

Ferrante. Speak; my desires are kindled, my fears quencht.

Giulio. Do not delay to die, lest crueller
Than common death befall you.

Ferrante. Then the wheel
Is ordered in that schedule! Must she too
Have her chaste limbs laid bare? Here lies the rack;
Here she would suffer ere it touch the skin.
No, I will break it with the thread of life
Ere the sound reach her. Talk no more of Heaven,
Of Providence, of Justice. Look on her.
Why should she suffer? what hath she from Heaven
Of comfort or protection?

Giulio. Talk not so.

Pity comes down when Hope hath flown away.

Ferrante. Illusion!

Giulio. If it were, which it is not,
Why break with vehement words such sweet illusion?
For were there nought above but empty air,
Nought but the clear blue sky where birds delight,
Soaring o'er myriad worlds of living dust
That roll in columns round the noontide ray,
Your heart would faint amid such solitude,
Would shrink in such vacuity: that heart
(*Ferrante!* can you hide its wants from me?)
Rises and looks around and calls aloud
For some kind Being, some consoling bosom,
Whereon to place its sorrows, and to rest.

Ferrante. Oh! that was here . . . I cannot look beyond.

Giulio. Hark! hear you not the people? to the window!
They shout and clap their hands when they first meet you
After short absence; what shall they now do?
Up! seize the moment; show yourself.

Ferrante. Stay, Giulio!

Draw me not thither; speak not of my wrongs;
I would await but not arouse their vengeance,
And would deserve but court not their applause.
Little of good shall good men hope from them,
Nothing shall wiser.

[*Aside.*

O were he away!

But if I fail, he must die too, being here.

Giulio. Let me call out: they are below the grate:
They would deliver you: try this one chance.
Obdurate! would you hold me down? They're gone!

Ferrante. Giulio! for shame! weep not, or here I stay
And let vile hands deform me.

Giulio. They shall never.

Ferrante. What smoke arises? Are there torches under?
Surely the crowd has past: 'tis from the stairs.

Giulio. Anticipate the blow.

Ferrante. One more must grieve!
And will she grieve like you, too tender Giulio!
Turn not away the head, the hand. What hold you?
Give, give it me. 'Tis keen. They call you forth.
Tell her . . . no, say not we shall meet again,
For tears flow always faster at those words . . .
May the thought come, but gently, like a dream.

GUZMAN AND HIS SON.

Son. O father! am I then within thy arms
Once more? O yes; what other heart beats so?

Gusman. Son! art thou free? How couldst thou have
escaped?

Son. God, God alone hath moved our enemy.

Gusman. He will perfect his work; he needs not us.

Son. I shall then hold my sister's eyes again
Within my own, her palm around my head!
Hence let us, while we may.

Gusman. What speakest thou?

Son. If thou wilt only bid the war to pause,
I then am free.

Gusman. Free? then thou art not yet?

Son. Unless our soldiers are withdrawn, not death
Alone awaits me.

Gusman. Mercy! mercy! God!

Without thy voice, without thy helping hand,
We stagger, weak as infants, from our duty.
Child! child! what can I do?

Son. Hath not God spoken?
And hath he ceast to speak?

Gusman. The brave man's breast
Is God's pure tabernacle: thro' the world,
Its storms, its deserts, we must carry it.
For him against the infidel I war;
No peace, no truce, unless at his command.

Son. God doth not always speak in thunder-clouds.
Even in the rain and dew, on the weak herb
That bends before them, there too is a voice
Breathing from Him. God is not always wroth;
He pities too, and most delights in pity.

Guzman. Art thou afraid ?

Son.

Father ! O father ! no.

Shame me not thus. But to have felt thy lips
Upon my brow, upon my eyes, my mouth,
And to have breathed his breath who gave me life
Now sixteen years ago . . . O father ! save me !

Guzman. Another would have said thou wert too rash ;
How many fathers, of their sons, have said it,
Ay, and of brave ones, and for being brave ;
I never said it, even when I lost thee,
Thee, my first-born, my only living son,
Precious as life . . . almost, almost, as honour.
Son ! thou art going into God's own glory,
And wouldst thou that thy father at one breath
Be spoil'd of his, and thine ?

Son.

No, father, no !

Fight on ; and think of my worst fault no more.
They shout.

Guzman (to his trumpeters). Reply.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*

Thus my last groan is drown'd.

THE CORONATION.

FEBE. GRISELDA. ROMOALDA. ARMIDA. FRA PEPE.

Febe. Our good king Ferdinand, altho' I say it,
He is the bravest king that ever trod
Upon neat's leather, with a star to brisket.

Griselda. Death, a dog's death, to whosoe'er denies it!

Febe. He's just like one of us, as kings should be.

Griselda. Ay, he has bowels.

Febe.

Faith! has he: I saw

His Majesty hold up a string of paste
Three palms in length, and down his throat it slid,
Just like the sword down that great conjuror's.

Griselda. And then he claspt his hand on t'other side,
So natural!

Febe. And laught as heartily
As any pickpocket when purseless wight
Cries *thief*, and points him out to some near sbirro,
Who looks all ways but that, and will hear first
What has been lost, and where are witnesses.

Griselda. Gnats, rats, and rogues, are bred in every city,
But only ours rears Ferdinands.

Febe.

Here comes

Fra Pepe.

Fra Pepe. What now want ye? What hath brought ye
Into this crowd, among these men and horses?

Griselda. Father! do shrive us ere we face such perils;
Trumpeters, poets, heroes, harlequins,
And overhead vast tottering catafalcs,
Choak-full, and mountain high; ten thousand arms
Around ten thousand waists, and scarce can save them.

Fra Pepe. I have no time to shrive ye.

Febe. God forbid
That we should urge it! But yon tripe smells bravely,
And we keep many Fridays in the week;
Do not turn this fine Tuesday into one.

Fra Pepe. Knowest thou what tripe is?

Febe. From ancient records
And faint remembrances.

Fra Pepe. Hast tasted it?

Griselda. Why should we not, on some rare festival?

Fra Pepe. Luxury will creep downward, and seize souls.
Who pampered you at this enormous rate?

Griselda. We are not young ones now, but heretofore
We have had lovers, and have seen carlino
Spin upon table; and the change was ours.

Fra Pepe. O shame upon ye!

Febe. Shame is called upon us
When we are old and needy; they who brought
Shame and old age upon us, call it loudest.

Fra Pepe. Thou talkest foolishly indeed, good woman!

Febe. We all talk our best things when teeth are flush.

Griselda. Wit is not wanting while the cheek wears roses
And coral lips are ready to impart it.

Romoalda. I doubt now whether all this tripe be real.

Armida. They got it cheap, or would not give so largely;
An ounce, two ounces, to one family.

Febe. What! kings mere hucksters! better say they stole it!

Griselda. Such glorious ones would scarcely steal the cattle,
Much less what some call offal. Rob poor farmers!
Come, Febe, if we listen to her talk

We may do penance in a stiller place.

Febe. Never say "come away," my good Griselda!
While they are forking it from pans and kettles
Wide as the crater and as piping-hot.

O Father Pepe! could you touch, see, smell it!
Bees may make honeycombs; what bee could ever
Make honeycomb like tripe? Ah fat! ah pith!
Soft, suctionable, savory.

Fra Pepe. Out upon thee!

Griselda. See there now! Off he goes!

Febe.

No fault of mine.

Griselda. Yes; thy shrill equally shouts, and rubbing down
Of mouth, with one arm first, and then the other
And then the apron. Who beside thyself
Would talk so touchingly, so near mid-day?
A qualm came over me; I felt half-famisht;

No monk on earth could stand it ; not the best
That ever faced the devil in the desert.

Romoalda. Between you, pretty work ! the frate gone !

Febe. Follow him : who detains you ? We want nothing
With you, signora !

Armida. Let those vulgar women
Talk about tripe ; we can buy liver, *buy* it,
Drink the half-flask, doze the half-hour, again
Be young, then shrive us. One night scores not deep.
There's, by my reckoning, mother Romoalda,
Only one night between us and to-morrow.

Romoalda (*striking her stomacher*). The best church-clock lies
under this red canvas,
And points, within a trice, to dinner-time.

Griselda. You totter about sadly, neighbour Febe !

Febe. No wonder ; they have thrown so many pulps
And peels of melon on the ground, I know
My feet are wet, and my whole stockings, with them
And plashy daffodils, like artichokes
In size, knee-deep, and palm-leaves long as boats :
So, were there room for falling, fall I must.

Griselda. May-hap, you tasted a cup's rim at starting ?

Febe. Before we met, one little broken one,
I sipt. They never told me 'twas so strong :
And then they took advantage of me.

Griselda. Men
Always do that with us poor lonely women.

Febe. 'Twas not the wine nor men : a fig for them !
This hubbub has confounded me, this crowd ;
Soldiers and monks, and mummers fill the street,
And candles bigger than the priests that bear them,
And saucy boys running aside the candles
To catch the drops, leaving one hand for mischief ;
And then the bells are making such a coil,
Saint against saint, from Mole to Capo-monte,
We can not hear the loudest voice cry *gara*
If horse or mule tramp muzzling into us.
In vain, *Griselda*, lift we up our shoulders
And whisper in God's ear we think it hard.

Griselda. Well, *Febe*, by stout shoving we are now
Beyond the mob. What ails thee ?

Febe. Many things
Ail me ; vexations and infirmities ;

Beside a tiny matter of an infant
I dropt into the sea through awkwardness.

Griselda. Did not the child cry out, as children should ?

Febe. It did. Well, well! I made an angel of it.

Griselda. Then say no more about it.

Febe. 'Tis in heaven,

Among the other angels : but I fear
That when they say, " Sing! sing, my little one! "
It may give answer, " Five hard fingers here
Have spoilt my singing."

Griselda. They who make an angel
Make more than they who make ten penitents,
And yet to make one penitent wins heaven.

Febe. I sometimes wish 'twere back again.

Griselda. To cry?

Febe. Ah! it *does* cry ere the first sea-mew cries ;
It wakes me many mornings, many nights,
And fields of poppies could not quiet it.

Griselda. Febe! we must not think of it to-day.
Sorrow is most offensive to the great,
And nobody should grieve when kings are near.
This, above all days, is a day of joy ;
Another king is given to the world,
And our first duty is to guard his throne.

Febe. And drink a little beaker to his health.
We, mother Romoalda! with Christ's help,
Will, against all his enemies, support him.
O! I am thirsty with the dust! beside,
I was so worried by that odious mob,
The people seem to push against me still.

ESSEX AND BACON.

Essex. I did believe, sir, I had helpt to raise
Many to wealth and station, some to fame, . .
And one to friendship.

Bacon. You, my noble earl,
Have done it ; and much more. We must lament
A power thus past (or rather thrown) away.

Essex. Thou ? thou lament it, Bacon ?

Bacon. To my soul.

Essex. Why then, with energy beyond the pitch
Of brawling law, cry vengeance ? when my fortune
Was pierced with every bolt from every hand,
Soon as the golden links were snapt asunder,
Which they who rule the earth held round that bird
Who bore their lightnings and struck down their foes.

Bacon. My gracious lord ! were always their commands
Well waited for ?

Essex. Nay, by my troth, my zeal
Outflew them.

Bacon. Your return was unadvised.

Essex. Unwelcome : that is worse.

Bacon. The worst of all
Was summoning to arms a loyal land,
Basking in peace and plenteousness.

Essex. How far
Extended this your basking ? court indeed
And inns of law were warm enough ; on those
The sun beats all the day, through all the year ;
Everything there so still and orderly,
That he who sneezes in them is caught up
And cudgel'd for his pains.

Bacon. Should he awake
Trumpets by sneezing, should he blow up banners,
'Twere well if only cudgels fell on him:
Our laws have sharper instruments, my lord!

Essex. I know it; and I knew it ere I rose.

Bacon. O! had this never happened!

Essex. Then wouldst thou
Have lost some smiles, some parleyings, some tags
Of ermine, and . . what more thou valuest
(As any wise man would) . . some little gold.

Bacon. Dross!

Essex (smiling). Very true! . . as men are dust and ashes.

Bacon. Such thoughts become all mortals; most of all
Those who have fallen under high displeasure,
Who have their God and Prince to reconcile,
And are about to change this brief vile life . .
Nay, nay, my lord! your life may rest unchanged
For years to come, if you, upon your knees,
Humbly ask pardon . .

Essex (fiercely). Pardon! [After hesitation.

I will ask it . .

Bacon. . . Before the privy council, and the court
Especially assembled.

Essex (indignantly). Not before
The best among them, were he quite alone,
No, by the soul of Essex! were he Raleigh . .
The only great man there.

Bacon. Are we so scorned?

Essex. Bacon! I did not say the only wise one;
So, do not break thy ring, or loose the stone.

Bacon. My lord! my finger might have been uneasy
Without such notice from that once high peer
Erewhile the Earl of Essex . . until treason
Level'd him lower than burgess or than churl.

Essex. I will not say thou liest; for thy tongue
Lags far behind thy heart; thy strongest wit
May stretch and strain, but never make them yoke-mates.

Bacon. This cork appliance, this hard breathing, served
While there was water under for support,
But cut a dismal figure in the mud.

Essex. To servile souls how abject seem the fallen!
Benchers and message-bearers stride o'er Essex!

Bacon. Unmasted pinnacle may row safely under
No high colossus, without pricking it.
But, sure, the valiant Earl is somewhat chafed . .
Who could have thought it! . . by a worm like me!

Essex. Begone! I have fairly weighed thee.

Bacon (*alone*).

He weigh me!

No man is stout enough* to trim the balance,
Much less to throw the weight in . . .

He weigh me!

Flaunting and brittle as a honeysuckle,
Sweet in the chamber, in the field blown down,
Ramping in vain to reach again its prop,
And crusht by the first footfall.

Arrogance

Stares, but sees badly: snatches with quick gripe
What seems within the reach, and, being infirm
Of stand, is overbalanced.

Shall I bear

Foul words upon me?

I have thrown them back

Manfully to the beard that wagged with them.

My courage is now safe beyond suspicion . . .

Myself can hardly doubt it after this.

Yet that audacious criminal dared spit

Reproaches! seldom are they bearable,

But, springing up from reason, sting like asps . . .

Not that the man has reason . . . he has none . . .

For, what had I to do with it? I spoke . . .

And, when we are commanded, we must speak.

It was her Grace . . . and surely she knows best.

I may now wash my hands of him at last,

I have but done my duty: fall who may.

* Bacon little knew or suspected that there was then existing (the only one that ever did exist) his superior in intellectual power. Position gives magnitude. While the world was rolling above Shakespeare, he was seen imperfectly: when he rose above the world, it was discovered that he was greater than the world. The most honest of his contemporaries would scarcely have admitted this, even had they known it. But vast objects of remote altitude must be looked at a long while before they are ascertained. Ages are the telescope-tubes that must be lengthened out for Shakespeare; and generations of men serve but as single witnesses to his claims.

WALTER TYRREL AND WILLIAM RUFUS.

Rufus. Tyrrel, spur onward! we must not await
The laggard lords: when they have heard the dogs
I warrant they will follow fast enough,
Each for his haunch. Thy roan is mettlesome;
How the rogue sides up to me, and claims
Acquaintance with young Yorkshire! not afraid
Of wrinkling lip, nor ear laid down like grass
By summer thunder-shower on Windsor mead.

Tyrrel. Behold, my liege! hither they troop amain,
Over yon gap.

Rufus. Over my pales? the dolts
Have broken down my pales!

Tyrrel. Please you, my liege,
Unless they had, they must have ridden round
Eleven miles.

Rufus. Why not have ridden round
Eleven miles? or twenty, were there need.
By our Lady! they shall be our carpenters
And mend what they have marr'd. At any time
I can make fifty lords; but who can make
As many head of deer, if mine escape?
And sure they will, unless they too are mad.
Call me that bishop . . . him with hunting-cap
Surcharged with cross, and scarlet above knee.

Tyrrel (galloping forward). Ho! my lord bishop!

Bishop. Who calls me?

Tyrrel. Your slave.

Bishop. Well said, if toned as well and timed as well.
Who art thou? citizen or hind? what wantest?

Tyrrel. My lord! your presence; but before the king;

Where it may grow more placid at its leisure.
 The morn is only streakt with red, my lord!
 You beat her out and out: how prettily
 You wear your stocking over head and ears!
 Keep off the gorse and broom! they soon catch fire!

Bishop. The king shall hear of this: I recognise
 Sir Walter Tyrrel.

Tyrrel. And Sir Walter Tyrrel
 By the same token duly recognises
 The Church's well-begotten son, well-fed,
 Well-mounted, and all well, except well-spoken,
 The spiritual lord of Winchester.

Bishop. Ay, by God's grace! pert losel!

Tyrrel. Prick along
 Lord bishop! quicker! catch fresh air! we want it;
 We have had foul enough till dinner-time.

Bishop. Varlet! I may chastise this insolence.

Tyrrel. I like those feathers: but there crows no cock
 Without an answer. Though the noisiest throat
 Sings from the belfrey of snug Winchester,
 Yet he from Westminster hath stouter spurs.

Bishop. God's blood! were I no bishop. . .

Tyrrel. Then thy own
 Were cooler.

Bishop. Whip that hound aside! O Christ!
 The beast has paw'd my housings! What a day
 For dirt!

Tyrrel. The scent lies well; pity no more
 The housings; look, my lord! here trots the king!

Rufus. Which of you broke my palings down?

Bishop. God knows,
 Most gracious sir.

Rufus. No doubt he does; but you,
 Bishop! could surely teach us what God knows.
 Ride back and order some score handicrafts
 To fix them in their places.

Bishop. The command
 Of our most gracious king shall be obeyed. [*Riding off.*]
 Malisons on the atheist! Who can tell
 Where are my squires and other men? confused
 Among the servitors of temporal lords!
 I must e'en turn again and hail that brute.
 Sir Walter! good Sir Walter! one half-word!

[*TYRREL rides toward him.*]

Sir Walter! may I task your courtesy
 To find me any of my followers?

Tyrrel. Willingly.

Rufus. Stay with me ; I want thee, Tyrrel !
What does the bishop bogle at ?

Tyrrel. At nothing.
He seeks his people, to retrieve the damage.

Rufus. Where are the lords ?

Tyrrel. Gone past your Grace, bare-headed,
And falling in the rear.

Rufus. Well, prick then on.
I care but little for the chase to-day,
Although the scent lies sweetly. To knock down
My paling is vexatious. We must see
Our great improvements in this forest ; what
Of roads blockt up, of hamlets swept away,
Of lurking dens called cottages, and cells,
And hermitages. Tyrrel ! thou didst right
And dutifully, to remove the house
Of thy forefathers. 'Twas an odd request
To leave the dovecote for the sake of those
Flea-bitten blind old pigeons. There it stands !
But, in God's name ! what mean these hives ? the bees
May sting my dogs.

Tyrrel. They hunt not in the summer.

Rufus. They may torment my fawns.

Tyrrel. Sir ! not unless
Driven from their hives : they like the flowers much better.

Rufus. Flowers ! and leave flowers too ?

Tyrrel. Only some half-wild,
In tangled knots ; balm, clary, marjoram.

Rufus. What lies beyond this close briar hedge, that smells
Through the thick dew upon it, pleasantly ?

Tyrrel. A poor low cottage : the dry marl-pit shields it,
And, frail and unsupported like itself,
Peace-breathing honeysuckles comfort it
In its misfortunes.

Rufus. I am fain to laugh
At thy rank minstrelsy. A poor low cottage !
Only a poor low cottage ! where, I ween,
A poor low maiden blesses Walter Tyrrel.

Tyrrel. It may be so.

Rufus. No ; it may not be so.
My orders were that all should be removed ;
And, out of special favour, special trust
In thee, Sir Walter, I consign'd the care
Into thy hands, of razing thy own house
And those about it ; since thou hast another
Fairer and newer, and more lands around.

Tyrrel. Hall, chapel, chamber, cellar, turret, grange,
Are level with the grass.

Rufus. What negligence
To leave the work then incomplete, when little
Was there remaining! Strip that roof, and start
Thy petty game from cover.

Tyrrel. O my liege!
Command not this!

Rufus. Make me no confidant
Of thy base loves.

Tyrrel. Nor you, my liege! nor any:
None such hath Walter Tyrrel.

Rufus. Thou 'rt at bay;
Thou hast forgotten thy avowal, man!

Tyrrel. My father's house is (like my father) gone:
But in that house, and from that father's heart
Mine grew into his likeness, and held thence
Its rich possessions . . . God forgive my boast!
He bade me help the needy, raise the low . . .

Rufus. And stand against thy king!

Tyrrel. How many yokes
Of oxen, from how many villages
For miles around, brought I, at my own charge,
To bear away the rafters and the beams
That were above my cradle at my birth,
And rang when I was christened, to the carouse
Of that glad father and his loyal friends!

Rufus. He kept good cheer, they tell me.

Tyrrel. Yonder thatch
Covers the worn-out woman at whose breast
I hung, an infant.

Rufus. Ay! and none beside?

Tyrrel. Four sons have fallen in the wars.

Rufus. Brave dogs!

Tyrrel. She hath none left.

Rufus. No daughter?

Tyrrel. One.

Rufus. I thought it.

Unkennel her.

Tyrrel. Grace! pity! mercy on her!

Rufus. I will not have hot scents about my chase.

Tyrrel. A virtuous daughter of a virtuous mother
Deserves not this, my liege!

Rufus. Am I to learn

What any subject at my hand deserves?

Tyrrel. Happy, who dares to teach it, and who can!

Rufus. And thou, forsooth!

Tyrrel. I have done my duty, sire!

Rufus. Not half: perform the rest, or bide my wrath.

Tyrrel. What, break athwart my knee the staff of age?

Rufus. Question me, villain!

Tyrrel. Villain I am none.

Rufus. Retort my words! By all the saints! thou diest,
False traitor!

Tyrrel. Sire! no private wrong, no word
Spoken in angriness, no threat against
My life or honour, urge me . . .

Rufus. Urge to what?
Dismountest?

Tyrrel. On my knees, as best beseems,
I ask . . . not pardon, sire! but spare, oh spare
The child devoted, the deserted mother!

Rufus. Take her; take both.

Tyrrel. She loves her home; her limbs
Fail her; her husband sleeps in that churchyard;
Her youngest child, born many years the last,
Lies (not half-length) along the father's coffin.
Such separate love grows stronger in the stem
(I have heard say) than others close together,
And that, where pass these funerals, all life's spring
Vanishes from behind them, all the fruits
Of riper age are shrivel'd, every sheaf
Husky; no gleaning left. She would die here,
Where from her bed she looks on his; no more
Able to rise, poor little soul! than he.

Rufus. Who would disturb them, child or father? where
Is the churchyard thou speakest of?

Tyrrel. Among
Yon nettles: we have level'd all the graves.

Rufus. Right: or our horses might have stumbled on them.

Tyrrel. Your grace oft spares the guilty; spare the innocent!

Rufus. Up from the dew! thy voice is hoarse already.

Tyrrel. Yet God hath heard it. It entreats again,
Once more, once only; spare this wretched house.

Rufus. No, nor thee neither.

Tyrrel. Speed me, God! and judge
O thou! between the oppressor and opprest!

[*He pierces RUFUS with an arrow.*

THE PARENTS OF LUTHER.

John Luther. I left thee, *Margaretta*, fast asleep,
 Thou, who wert always earlier than myself,
 Yet hast no mine to trudge to, hast no wedge
 To sharpen at the forge, no pickaxe loose
 In handle.

Come, blush not again : thy cheeks
 May now shake off those blossoms which they bore
 So thick this morning that last night's avowal
 Nestles among them still.

So, in few months
 A noisier bird partakes our whispering bower ?
 Say it again.

Margaretta. And, in my dream, I blush'd !

John. Idler ! wert dreaming too ? and after dawn ?

Marg. In truth was I.

John. Of me ?

Marg. No, not of you.

John. No matter ; for methinks some Seraph's wing
 Fann'd that bright countenance.

Marg. Methinks it did.
 And stir'd my soul within.

How could you go
 And never say good-bye, and give no kiss ?

John. It might have waken'd thee. I can give more
 Kisses than sleep : so thinking, I heav'd up
 Slowly my elbow from above the pillow,
 And, when I saw it woke thee not, went forth.

Marg. I would have been awaken'd for a kiss,
 And a good-bye, or either, if not both.

John. Thy dreams were not worth much then.

Marg. Few dreams are ;
But . . .

John. By my troth ! I will intrench upon
The woman's dowry, and will contradict,
Tho' I should never contradict again.
I have got more from dreams a hundred-fold
Than all the solid earth, than field, than town,
Than (the close niggard purse that cramps my fist)
The mine will ever bring me.

Marg. So have I,
And so shall each indeed, if this be true.

John. What was it then ? for when good dreams befall
The true of heart, 'tis likely they come true.
A vein of gold ? ay ? silver ? copper ? iron ?
Lead ? sulphur ? alum ? alabaster ? coal ?
Shake not those ringlets nor let down those eyes,
Tho' they look prettier for it, but speak out.
True, these are not thy dainties.

Marg. Guess again.

John. Crystalline kitchens, amber-basted spits,
Whizzing with frothy savory salamanders,
And swans that might (so plump and pleasant-looking)
Swim in the water from the mouths of knights ;
And ostrich-eggs off coral woods (the nests
Outside of cinnamon, inside of saffron,
And mortar'd well, for safety-sake, with myrrh),
Serv'd up in fern-leaves green before the Flood ?

Marg. Stuff ! you will never guess it, I am sure.

John. No ? and yet these are well worth dreaming of.
Marg. Try once again.

John. Faith ! it is kind to let me.
Under-ground beer-cascades from Nuremberg ?
Rhine vintage stealing from Electoral cellars,
And, broader than sea-baths for mermaid brides,
With fluits upon the surface strides across,
Pink concha, to catch it and to light it down ;
And music from basaltic organ-pipes
For dancing ; and five fairies to one man.

Marg. Oh his wild fancies ! . . . Are they innocent ?

John. I think I must be near it by that shrug.
Spicy sack-posset, roaring from hot springs
And running off like mad thro' candied cliffs,
But catching now and then some fruit that drops . . .
Shake thy head yet ? why then thou hast the palsy.
Zooks ! I have thought of all things probable
And come to my wits' end. What canst thou mean ?

Marg. Nay, I have half a mind now not to tell.

John. Then it is out . . . Thy whole one ill could hold it.
A woman's mind hates pitch upon its seams.

Marg. Hush! one word more, and then my lips are closed.

John. Pish! one more word, and then my lips . . .

Marg. O rare
Impudent man! . . . and such discourse from you!
I dreamt we had a boy . . .

John. A wench, a wench . . .

A boy were not like thee.

Marg. I said a boy.

John. Well, let us have him, if we miss the girl.

Marg. My father told me he *must* have a boy,
And call him Martin (his own name) because
Saint Martin both was brave and cloth'd the poor.

John. Hurrah then for Saint Martin! he shall have
Enough to work on in this house of ours.

Marg. Now do not laugh, dear husband! but this dream
Seem'd somewhat more.

John. So do all dreams, ere past.

Marg. Well, but it seems so still.

John. Ay, twist my fingers,
Basketing them to hold it.

Marg. Never grave!

• *John.* I shall be.

Marg. That one thought should make you now.

John. And that one tap upon the cheek to boot.

Marg. I do believe, if you were call'd to Heaven
You would stay toying here.

John. I doubt I should.

Methinks I set my back against the gate
Thrown open to me by this rosy hand,
And look both ways, but see more heaven than earth:
Give me thy dream: thou puttest it aside:
I must be feasted: fetch it forth at once.

Marg. Husband! I dreamt the child was in my arms,
And held a sword, which from its little grasp
I could not move, nor you: I dreamt that proud
But tottering shapes in purple filigree
Pull'd at it, and he laugh.

John. They frighten'd thee?

Marg. Frighten'd me! no: the infant's strength prevail'd.
Devils, with angels' faces, throng'd about;
Some offer'd flowers, and some held cups behind,
And some held daggers under silken stoles.

John. These frighten'd thee, however.

Marg. He knew all ;
I knew he did.

John. A dream ! a dream indeed !
He knew and laught !

Marg. He sought his mother's breast,
And lookt at them no longer.

All the room
Was fill'd with light and gladness.

John. He shall be
Richer than we are ; he shall mount his horse . .
A feat above his father ; and be one
Of the duke's spearmen.

Marg. God forbid ! they lead
Unrighteous lives, and often fall untimely.

John. A lion-hearted lad shall Martin be.
Marg. God willing ; if *his* servant ; but not else.
I have such hopes, full hopes, hopes overflowing.

John. A grave grand man, half collar and half cross,
With chain enough to hold our mastiff by,
Thou fain wouldst have him. Out of dirt so stiff
Old Satan fashioneth his idol, Pride.

Marg. If proud and cruel to the weak, and bent
To turn all blessings from their even course
To his own kind and company, may he
Never be great, with collar, cross, and chain ;
No, nor be ever angel, if, O God !
He be a fallen angel at the last.

[*After a pause.*

Uncle, you know, is sacristan ; and uncle
Had once an uncle who was parish priest.

John. He was the man who sung so merrily
Those verses which few scholars understand,
Yet which they can not hide away, nor drive
The man from memory after forty years.

Marg. (sings). " Our brightest pleasures are reflected pleasures.
And they shine sweetest from the cottage-wall."

John. The very same.

Marg. We understand them, John !

John. An inking. But your uncle sacristan
Hath neither sword nor spur.

Marg. It was a sword,
A flaming sword, but innocent, I saw ;
And I have seen in pictures such as that,
And in the hands of angels borne on clouds.
He may defend our faith, drive out the Turk,
And quench the crescent in the Danaw stream.

John. Thou, who begannest softly, singest now
Shrill as a throistle.

Marg. Have we then no cause
To sing as throstles after sign thus strange ?

John. Because it was so strange, must we believe
The rather ?

Marg. Yes ; no fire was in the house,
No splinter, not a spark. The Virgin's chin
Shone not with rushlight under it ; 'twas out.
For night was almost over, if not past,
And the Count's chapel has not half that blaze
On the Count's birth-day, nor the hall at night.
Ah surely, surely fare like ours sends up
No idle fumes ; nor wish nor hope of mine
Fashion'd so bright a substance to a form
So beautiful. There must be truth in it.

John. There shall be then. Your uncle's sacristy
Shall hold the armour quite invisible,
Until our little Martin some fine day
Bursts the door open, spurr'd, caparison'd,
Dukes lead his bridle, princes tramp behind.
He may be pope . . . who knows ?

Marg. Are you in earnest ?
But if he should be pope, will he love *us* ?
Or let us (O yes, sure he would !) love *him* ?
Nor slink away, ashamed ? Pope, no ; not pope,
But bishop (ay ?) he may be ? There are few
Powerfuller folks than uncle Grimmermann.
Promise he scarce would give us, but a wink
Of hope he gave, to make a chorister.

John. " If thou wilt find materials," were his words.

Marg. I did not mark the words ; they were too light :
And yet he never breaks his troth.

John. Not he :
No, he would rather break his fast ten times.
Do not look seriously . . . when church allows,
I mean ; no more ; six days a week ; not seven.
I *have* seen houses where the Friday cheese
Was not (in *my* mind) cut with Thursday knife.

Marg. O now for shame ! such houses can not stand.
Pr'ythee talk reason. As the furnace-mouth
Shows only fire, so yours shows laughter only.
Choristers have been friars ; ours may be ;
And then a father abbot.

John. At one leap,
As salmon up Schaffhausen.

Marg. Just the same . . .
Then . . .

John. Ring the bells ! Martin is pope, by Jove !

HENRY THE EIGHTH AND ANNE BOLEYN.

SCENE IN THE TOWER.

ANNE BOLEYN *and a* CONSTABLE *of the* TOWER.

Anne Boleyn. Is your liege ill, sir, that you look so anxious?

Constable of the Tower. Madam!

Anne. I would not ask what you may wish
To keep a secret from me; but indeed
This right, I think, is left me; I would know
If my poor husband is quite well to-day.

Constable. Pardon me, gracious lady! what can prompt
To this inquiry?

Anne. I have now *my* secret.

Constable. I must report all questions, sayings, doings,
Movements, and looks of yours. His Highness may
Be ruffled at this eagerness to ask
About his health.

Anne. I am used to ask about it.
Beside, he may remember . . .

Constable. For your Highness
Gladly will I remind our sovran Lord
Of any promise.

Anne. Oh no! do not that!
It would incense him: he made only one,
And Heaven alone that heard him must remind him.
Last night I do suspect, but am not sure,
He scarcely was what kings and husbands should be.
A little wine has great effect upon

Warm hearts (and Henry's heart *was* very warm)
 And upon strong resentments : I do fear
 He has those too. But all his friends must love him.
 He may have past (poor Henry !) a bad night,
 Thinking upon his hasty resolution.

Constable. Lady ! I grieve to tell you, worse than that ;
 Far worse !

Anne. Oh, mercy, then ! the child ! the child !
 Why not have told me of all this before ?
 What boots it to have been a guiltless wife,
 When I, who should have thought the first about it,
 Am an ill mother ? Not to think of thee,
 My darling ! my Elizabeth ! whose cradle
 Rocks in my ear and almost crazes me.
 Is she safe ? Tell me, tell me, is she living ?

Constable. Safe, lady, and asleep in rosy health,
 And radiant (if there yet be light enough
 To show it on her face) with pleasant dreams,
 Such as young angels come on earth to play with.

Anne. Were I but sure that I could dream of her
 As I, until last autumn, oft have done,
 Joyously, blithely, only waking up
 Afraid of having hurt her by my arms
 Too wildly in my rapture thrown around her,
 I would lay down my weary head, and sleep,
 Although the pillow be a little strange,
 Nor like a bridal or a childbed pillow.

Constable. O lady ! spare those words !

Anne. Why spare them ? when
 Departure from this world would never be
 Departure from its joys : the joys of heaven
 Would mingle with them scarcely with fresh sweetness.

Constable (*falling on his knees*). My queen !

Anne. Arise, sir constable !

Constable. My queen !
 Heaven's joys lie close before you.

Anne. And you weep !
 Few days, I know, are left me ; they will melt
 All into one, all pure, all peaceable ;
 No starts from slumber into bitter tears,
 No struggles with sick hopes and wild desires,
 No cruel father cutting down the tree
 To crush the child that sits upon its bough
 And looks abroad, too tender for suspicion,
 Too happy even for hope, maker of happiness.
 I could weep too, nor sinfully, at this.

Thou knowest, O my God! thou surely knowest
'Tis no repining at thy call or will.

[Constable, on his knees presents the Writ of Execution.

I can do nothing now. Take back that writing,
And tell them so, poor souls! Say to the widow,
I grieve, and can *but* grieve for her; persuade her
That children, although fatherless, are blessings;
And teach those little ones, if e'er you see them,
They are not half so badly off as some.
Fold up the paper; put it quite aside;
I am no queen; I have no almoner.
Ah, now I weep indeed! Put, put it by.
Many . . . I grieve (yet, *should* I grieve?) to think it,
Many will often say, when I am gone,
They once had a young queen to pity them.
Nay, though I mention'd I had nought to give,
Yet dash not on your head, nor grapple so
With those ungentle hands, while I am here,
A helpless widow's innocent petition.
Smoothe it; return it with all courtesy:
Smoothe 'it, I say again: frame some kind words
And see they find their place, then tender it.
What! in this manner gentlemen of birth
Present us papers? turn they thus away,
Putting their palms between their eyes and us?
Sir! I was queen . . . and you were kind unto me
When I was queen no longer: why so changed?
Give it . . . but what is now my signature?
Ignorant are you, or incredulous,
That not a clasp is left me? not a stone,
The vilest; not chalcedony, not agate.
Promise her all my dresses, when . . . no, no . . .
I am grown superstitious; they might bring
Misfortune on her, having been Anne Boleyn's.

Constable. Lady! I wish this scroll could suffocate
My voice. One order I must disobey,
To place it in your hand and mark you read it.
I lay it at your feet, craving your pardon
And God's, my lady!

Anne. Rise up; give it me;
I know it ere I read it, but I read it
Because it is the king's, whom I have sworn
To love and to obey.

Constable (*aside*). Her mind's distraught!
Alas, she smiles!

Anne. The worst hath long been over;

Henry loves courage ; he will love my child
 For this ; although I want more than I have ;
 And yet how merciful at last is Heaven
 To give me but thus much for her sweet sake !

SCENE IN RICHMOND CHASE.

HENRY, COURTIERS, HOUNDS, &c.

Henry. Northumberland ! pray tell me, if thou canst,
 Who is that young one in the green and gold ?
 Dost thou not see her ? hast thou left both eyes
 Upon the bushes ?

Northumberland. There are many, sir,
 In the same livery.

Henry. I mean her yonder
 On the iron-gray with yellow round his ears.
 Impudent wench ! she turns away her cheek !

Northumberland. [After inquiring.
 The Lady Katharine Parr, an' please your Highness.

Henry. Faith ! she *doth* please me. What a sap is rising
 In that young bud ! how supple ! yet how solid !
 What palpable perfection ! ay, Lord Surrey ?

Surrey. A bloom well worthy of a monarch's bower,
 Where only one more lovely smiles beside him.

Henry. Though spring is stirring, yet give me the summer . . .

I can wait yet. Some day, one not far off,
 I would confer with her at Hampton Court . . .
 Merely to ask her how she likes the chase :
 We shall not have another all this season.
 The stag alone can help us on in May :
 To-morrow is the twentieth.

Hark ! the knell
 From Paul's ! . . . the Tower-gun, too ! I am right enough !
 [Claps his hands.
 I am a widower ! [Again claps his hands.

By this hour to-morrow
 Sunny Jane Seymour's long and laughing eyes
 Shall light me to our chamber.

Lords ! prick on !
 The merry hounds are chiding ! To the chase
 To-day ! our coronation for to-morrow.
 How sweetly that bell warbled o'er the water.

Norfolk. I like it better than the virginals.

Suffolk. They are poor music.

Norfolk. Songs but make them worse.

Henry. Come ; prick we onward. Shall we have a race ?

Surrey. We are well mounted ; but the youngest man
Will win, for majesty sits lightly on him.

Henry. It may well be. I have lost half my weight
This morning, lithesome as I was before.

Away !

Norfolk. His saddle swells its bolstered back
Already full two hundred yards before us.

THREE SCENES, NOT FOR THE STAGE.

SCENE I.

DIANA DE POICTIERS *and* CAILLETTE.

D. Caillette! by those lowered eyes I often thought
You loved me.

C. Madame, where we dare not love
We may adore.

D. Speak plainly. Dost thou love me?
Rise, simpleton! If thou dost love me, save
My father, whom a cruel doom awaits.

The king hath sworn it: and the king hath said
Truth, if it leaves the world, shall rest with kings.

C. Is this encouragement to plead for pardon
Against his oath?

D. Argue not. Save my father.
He raised up thine, and gave the rank to thee,
Where none stands higher in favour.

C. Ah! God knows,
God, who will pardon me, that, when the post
Of Fool was forced on me, I seiz'd my dirk
And would have stabbed myself: unfriendly hand
Seiz'd mine, and left me life, grief, shame, disgrace.

D. Thy noble form, thy nobler manners, give
The power of scorn to thee; grief we will share,
Disgrace we never will. The worst disgrace,
In all men's eyes is that which kings inflict:
Their frown the gravest shudder at; the block
Blackens beneath it: such my father's doom.
Give the king verses, let him call them his;
Give him witticisms; they win where pity fails;
Try thou but these and we may hope success.

C. Could Francis see that look, and kiss that hand
I now have kist and dare to hold, but dare not
(Lest my heart break) release . . .

D. Go, win my suit,
For thou canst win it, and none other can.
Go, tarry not.

C. The word wings me away ;
For the first time I go hence willingly.

SCENE II.

DIANA and CAILLETTE.

D. Well hast thou sped, Caillette ! It ill beseems
To show my gratitude within these walls ;
Beside, I hasten to the court to thank
Our gracious monarch for his clemency :
To thee I owe it all.

C. 'Tis only Fools
Who plead for mercy to an angry king.
I of all fools am the most fortunate.
Many are merry, few of them are happy,
I am for life. I will ask one more favour.

D. Ask any.

C. None from you, my sovran lady ;
One from our sovran lord.

D. What can that be ?

C. Freedom from court, from courtier, and from king.
O ! would God grant me evermore to kneel
Upon these fragrant rushes, close before
The tapestry where tread these slender feet !

D. Hush ! hear you not the horses tramp the stones
Under the archway ? Many days of rest
Since my disquietude hath kept me in
Make them impatient to prance forth again.
I see you in your fit habiliments
Ready to come with me.

C. To follow.

D. No ;
To sit in front of me, that I may see
The face of him who saved my father's life.

SCENE III.

FRANCIS, DIANA, CAILLETTE, CHANCELLOR.

Fr. What means this whispering at the folding-door,
Before the curtain and behind it ?

Chan. Sire!
Caillette, your Majesty's appointed Fool,
Hath ventured to come forward with a dame
Who, from her father's criminality,
Must have incur'd your Majesty's ill-will.

Fr. Ill-favour only can incur ill-will
With me.

Chan. Too surely she is not ill-favour'd.

Fr. Let her, then, enter. Never would Caillette
Bring ugly one or cruel one to me.

Enter DIANA and CAILLETTE.

Fr. Diana! troth! I am well pleas'd to see
Thy beauteous face within this hall again.
Thy suit is granted.

D. Gracious Sire! I come
To offer my most humble thanks for this.

Fr. Thou couldst have won without an intercessor,
But thou hast chosen well in choosing him:
No one is worthier of a lady's love.

D. I think so, Sire! He has all mine where God's
And your own laws have sanction'd it.

Fr. None else?

[Without a reply she turns to Caillette.

D. Caillette! take thou my hand: before thy king,
Before thy God, accept my gratitude.

Chan. By heaven! she kisses him! For shame! for shame!

Fr. None but a virtuous woman dared do thus.
There have been modest poets; Caillette is
The only modest fool that ever lived.

BEATRICE CENCI: FIVE SCENES.

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- I. COUNT CENCI AND CONFESSOR.
 - II. BEATRICE AND HER AJA MARGARITA.
 - III. COUNT, STEWARD, PEASANTS, BEATRICE.
 - IV. BEATRICE AND POPE CLEMENT VIII.
 - V. DEATH OF BEATRICE.

PRÉFACE.

POETRY is not History. In features they may resemble; in particulars, in combinations, in sequences, they must differ. History should 'tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.' Poetry, like all the fine arts, is eclectic. Where she does not wholly invent, she at one time amplifies and elevates; at another, with equal power, she simplifies, she softens, she suppresses. This part of her prerogative has fallen much into desuetude. Many a rich proprietor is a bad husbandman. The system of deep draining, or even of carrying off the surface-water, is but partially introduced. We have, however, seen tragedians, of late, who bear the pall and sceptre 'right royally.'

The author of the *Five Scenes* assumes no place among them; he stands only just near enough to make his plaudit heard. These scenes interfere very little with Shelley's noble tragedy. Two names are the same; one character, by necessity, is similar; Count Cenci, the wickedest man on record. His benefactions to the Papacy, under the rubric of penalties or quit-rents for crimes, amounted to three hundred thousand crowns; so that after Saint Peter, King Pepin, and Countess Matilda, the Roman See was under greater obligations to him than to any other supporter. Crimes in the Papal States are as productive to *Government* as vines and olives: no wonder then his death was so cruelly avenged. His life had been its *gaudy-day*; and his loss was the severest it ever had sustained in one person. Yet, so little of gratitude is there in high places, his funeral was unattended by the Cardinals and Court; and, what is more remarkable, no poet wrote an elegy to deplore or an epitaph to praise him.

SCENE I.

COUNT CENCI *and* CONFESSOR, *in Rome.*

Confessor. Our thoughts, my lord, are not entirely ours:
The Tempter hath much influence over them,
And sways them to and fro.

Count Cenci. More often to
Than fro, methinks.

Confessor. Prayer can do much, and more
Confession, most goodwill toward the Church.
Nieces and uncles, aunts and nephews, meet
In holy matrimony; but beyond,
The Church forbids; nor grants even these without
Due cause, in alms and Petropatrimonials.

Count Cenci. If one may do it, why may not another?

Confessor. Only the great may do it; only princes.
Sovrans may ride where common men must walk,
And may with safety and with seemliness . . .
With seemliness! aye more . . . with acclamation,
And dance and bonfire, leap across the sheepwalk
Where sheep and shepherd humbly creep along.

Count Cenci. Such are their doings in the Church and Court
And other places, for example-sake
No doubt.

Confessor. No doubt whatever. Great the good
Arising from the wealth they thus disburse.
The Church, thus aiding and thus aided, throws
Her sackcloth from her, and sits up elate,
Triumphant, glorified, the spouse of Christ,
Born in the manger but to mount the throne.
None but the fool and the ungodly doubt
These saving truths.

Count Cenci. None but the fool, most surely;
For who beside the fool would pour his broth
Upon the threshing-floor at noontide hour
When he is hungry and may take his fill?
About the ungodly you know more than I,
Who never have held converse with the knaves,
For, to my mind, they must be fools as well;
Sure to be losers at our table here,
And doubtful of revenge another day.

Confessor. They dare not meet confession face to face,
As honest and braver sinners do,
Like you, my Lord, who ask before you take,
Ready to pay the penalty of guilt,
And weighing both in steady even scales.

Count Cenci. You always comfort the few qualms that rise
Within my breast, too empty or too full.
The present sometimes puzzles me; the past
Is past for ever.

Confessor. But beyond the grave . . .

Count Cenci. I am short-sighted, and would spare my eyes;

Too much light hurts them : you wear spectacles,
And take them off and put them on again,
To read or not to read, as suits you best.

Confessor. Your lordship has paid dearly for some sins !

Count Cenci. Churchmen may get them cheaper ; they can whirl
The incense round and sweeten one another.

Confessor. Count ! we are friends ; but this sounds rather free.

Count Cenci. My speech is free, and free too is my hand.

Three paoli is the price of masses now
To the poor man ; the citizens pay five ;
The noble seven ; but often bargaining
For thirteen to the dozen : I meanwhile
Reckon but twelve, and pay my crown a-piece,
Ay, for a thousand, father, for a thousand . . .
If this won't save me, what the devil can ?

Confessor. Do not be angry ; let us hope it will ;
But matters, awkward matters, lie between . . .
We say no masses for the soul on earth.

Count Cenci. Yet here it hath its troubles as down yonder ;
Masses might oil them over on the spot
And supple the sting's barb ; it lies not deep.

Confessor. No, no ; far different is their ordinance.

Count Cenci. Well, I believe it : let us say no more.

Confessor. Best so, my son ! Sweet, sweet is resignation.
Three hundred thousand crowns have overlaid
Some gross enormities : stifled they lie,
No whisper over them : the Pope's right hand
Hath wiped the record from the Book of Life.

Count Cenci. Are you quite sure ?

Confessor. Infallibility
Declares it.

Count Cenci. Bless infallibility !

Confessor. Sin not, my son ! but, sinning, straight confess
And stand absolved.

Count Cenci. Plague me no more. I have
Confest. The wish . . . again I swear . . . is odious.

Confessor. The very thought confounds and petrifies me.
Ten yokes of oxen, fifty casks of wine
(Were it Orvieto), scarcely would efface
Such scandal.

Count Cenci. I have play'd away the worth
Of those ten yokes, those fifty casks, but lately,
And therefore have not now wherewith . . .

Confessor. The sin
Of gambling is, alas ! worse . . . worse than all.
(*After a pause.*) If you will have the peach . . . why, have the
peach ;

But pay for it: the crab and sloe come cheaper,
Costly or vile, 'tis better to abstain.

[CONFESSOR goes out, the COUNT remains.]

Count Cenci (alone). There must be (since all fear it) pains
below.

But how another's back can pass for mine,
Or how the scourge be soften'd into down
By holy water, puzzles me: no drop
Is there; and nothing holy. Doubt I will.
Now, can these fellows in their hearts believe
What they would teach us? Yes; they must. Methinks
I have some courage: I dare many things,
Most things; yet were I certain I should fall
Into a lion's jaws at close of day
If I went on, I should be loth to go,
Altho' some nightcap from some booth well barr'd
Opens a window, crying *Never fear!*
Is there no likeness? Theirs is the look-out.
They toss my sins on shoulder readily;
Are they quite sure they can as readily
Shuffle them off again? They catch our pouch.
The price, the stipulated price, I pay;
Will the receiver be as prompt to them?
May not he question them? Well! there are gone
Three hundred thousand crowns; and more must go;
I shall cry *quits* . . . but what will their cry be?
When time is over, none can ask for time;
Payment must come . . . and these must pay, not I.
'Three hundred thousand crowns,' runs my receipt,
'Holiness and Infallibility'
At bottom. I am safe: the firm is good.
If the wax burn their fingers, let them blow
And cool it: there it sticks: my part is done.

SCENE II.

BEATRICE CENCI *and her* AJA MARGARITA.

Margarita. Blessed be Saint Remigio! This day year,
This his own day, was held the marriage-feast
Within our castle-walls, which always frown'd
Till then, and never since smiled heartily.

Beatrice. We have been very happy, Margarita,
Before and since.

Margarita. I want another feast;
I yearn; and you must give it, lady mine.

Beatrice. My father can alone ordain a feast

Other than what this pleasant vintage-time
Always brings round.

Margarita. Things are got ready soon.
Your sister for her bridal festival
Borrow'd some vases fill'd with citron-trees
From those who brought the chaplets. Signor Conte
Has not one citron-tree, one orange-bush,
One lemon, one train'd jessamine : he never
Has prickt his finger with bare lavender,
To curse it. Flowers and music he abhors.
And how he hated those dull nightingales !
Indeed they are too tiresome : what think you ?

Beatrice. If their sweet sorrow overshadows mine
I ought to love them for it, and I do.
I have not always thought them melancholy ;
'Tis but of late ; and gayer things are worse.

Margarita. You were less childish when you were a child.
However, flowers you cull as formerly
And put them in your bosom.

Beatrice. They are cool.

Margarita. Are they ? Some too are sweet. The Count is
caught

By fragrance ; not their vulgar fragrance ; gloves,
Gloves I have seen (no matches though) that smelt
Deliciously, about his private room.
But music ! we keep music to ourselves,
And close the door upon it, like the plague.
Make last year this. I did believe, I did
Indeed, that you could better understand
My meaning.

Beatrice. I have understood it well,
But dare not ask my father anything ;
It is undaughterly, unmaidenly,
To ask for a carousal or a dance.
My sister and my brother may suggest
More properly what might entice our friends.

Margarita. I doubt it. One enticement, one alone,
Depends on you. Marry, my pretty dove !

Beatrice. Marry ? and whom ?

Margarita. Have you forgotten all
Who drank the vintage of the year before
To make (they said) room for last year's ?

Beatrice. In truth
I hardly know their names. I sat not with 'em
At supper or at dinner or at dance . . .
Although at dance I was, but placed apart,
With you beside me, pleas'd not quite so well.

Margarita. May-be. But you saw all, and all saw you.

Beatrice. May-be that too. I saw them all, and lookt
With joy upon them: whether they saw *me*
I know not, heed not: 'twas enough that joy
Seem'd universal.

Margarita. But among the guests
Could not you name one name?

Beatrice. Perhaps I could,
And more than one, give me but time to think.

Margarita. None yet? none? Let me call them over then.
Don Beppo, Don Olinto, Don Olimpio,
Don Prospero-Leonzio Buffalmacco,
Don Cane della Scala, Don Gatteschi,
Don Tissaferne, Don Ambrogio,
Don Michel-Angiolo, Don Angiolo
Without the Michel . . .

Beatrice. Take your breath, dear Aja.
They weary you. Suppose we leave the rest.

Margarita. Don Carlo, Don Ferrante, Don Camillo,
Don Agostino Pecore, Don Gallo,
Don Pio-Maria-Giuseppe Squarzialupi,
Don Innocenzio-Flavio Cinghialone,
Don Neri, Don Petruccio, Don Giuliano,
Don Tito, Don Trajano, Don Aurelio,
Three pretty brothers, save Aurelio's eye,
A little red about it, and Trajano's
Swerving a little, but as black as jet,
And bright as dagger drawn out overnight
And seen to, and fresh-whetted for revenge.
Your noble father hath such furniture,
Stored where you children might not hurt yourselves,
Not in the armoury, but close behind
Old breviaries and missals, and among
The holy relics that preserve the house,
Frightening the demons from it night and day.

Beatrice. Oh! rather run through fifty names than tell
Such stories.

Margarita. Fifty! aye, there were threescore,
Or near upon it . . . *men*, I mean; we women
Here count for nothing.

Beatrice. Not in dance?
Margarita. They all
Had partners; that is certain; but what then?

Beatrice. You seem to have collected a whole host
Of the young men; the ladies you forget.

Margarita. Even less worth remembrance.

Beatrice. Some were lovely.

Margarita. I saw no loveliness ; and why should you,
Whom such girls envy.

Beatrice. Envy me ? I shared
No partner. Only one, and she but once
Lookt at me : 'twas when I had clapt my hands
After that pretty song ; which then she bade
Her lover bring me, and you snatcht away.

Margarita. Such silly words !

Beatrice. Yes ; but sung plaintively.
I wish I sang as well.

Margarita. Try then once more.

Beatrice. You call them silly ; so indeed they are.

Margarita. Songs sound the sweeter in the solitude
Of sense.

Beatrice. Who wrote them ?

Margarita. Some young idle boy,
Who should be whipt for his effrontery.
Begin ; or you will have more ears about.

Beatrice. I have no heart to sing it.

Margarita. Then will I.

What says the dove on yonder tree ?

Coo coo . . . and only a coo coo ?

I hear as plain as plain can be,
Poor restless bird ! *come ! come ! do ! do !*
The words I often said to you.

If blushes pain not, be ashamed

A bird hath caught the sounds from me,
While you, by that mild teacher blamed,
Have yet to learn by heart what he
Repeats so well, so tenderly.

Beatrice. O thank you ! dearest *Margarita*, thank you !
You sang them with such tenderness ; you made
The most of them.

Margarita. I made them all they are.
Let me go on while memory is at hand,
Or half the signors will slip through my fingers.

Beatrice. How good you are ! but are you not quite tired ?

Margarita. Now you have put me out. Peace ! let me try.
Don Sigismondo with his twin Goffredo,
Don Serafino, Don Serafico,
Don Sant-Elizabetha, Don Santa-Ann,
Don Beatifico, Don Ipsilante . . .

Beatrice. O Aja !

Margarita. So ! the shoe then pinches there ?

Beatrice. Rather go on than say it. Who is he ?

Margarita. No very proper man. I might have run
A furlong further with more likelihood.

Don Biagio, Don Cristofano, Don Bino,
 Don Agostino, Don Teodosio,
 Don Mario, Don Bastiano, Don Eufemio,
 Don Giorgio, Don Giorgione, Don Silvestro,
 Don Gasparo, Don Stefano, Don Gino.

Beatrice. O what a river full of sparkling bubbles!
 Will the stream never end?

Margarita. Not yet awhile.
 Don Cinque-Pesci, Don Maria-Balbo,
 Don Romolo, Don Cino, Don Gieronimo,
 Don Tertulliano (Teresina's brother),
 Don Opobalsamo-di-Caridade,
 Don Romualdo, Don Ricupero,
 Don Unigenito Gino Cappone,
 Don Amoro-Galateso Stella,
 Don Braccioforte, Don Pacifico,
 Don Bacio-Santa-Croce Cicciporci,
 Don Carl-Onofrio-Gru de' Beccafichi.

Beatrice. O the strange names!

Margarita. Men never choose their own,
 But take them as they're given, to show Saint Peter,
 Who knows their water-mark and lets them pass.

Beatrice. No doubt of that . . . and we may let them too.

Margarita. Wait, wait a moment: here are some few more.
 Don Luca, Don Abele, Don Marino,
 Don Sosimo, Don Zeno, Don Camillo,
 Don Loretano (heir of Don Fulgenzio),
 Don Curio de Montaspro, Don Pasquale.

Beatrice. What an interminable waste of names!
 Are not the grills of last year gone by?

Margarita. Nearly. Sandrino, Piero, and Cirillo;
 The two first are, the other should be, poor,
 Noble, but wanting pride, and shunning friends.

Beatrice. Cirillo! sure 'twas he that sate beside
 The little girl whose arms and legs were burnt
 So sadly.

Margarita. Hideously, most hideously.
 Her mother left her by the fire alone
 In infancy.

Beatrice. Alone he sat with her
 On a long barrel.

Margarita. Heeding not who laught
 Outrageously.

Beatrice. I saw them, I saw *him* . . .
 And could have kist him . . . had he been my brother . . .

Margarita. And rather handsomer.

Beatrice. Could he be that?

Margarita. So! Does the pin stick there? aye, to the head.

Beatrice. I ought to love him: but we never love
(I do believe) the only men we ought,
Or not as we should love them if we might.

Margarita. He would not join the party: no, not he,
Nor offer, where 'twas proper, one salute:
That ugly barrel and that uglier child
Besotted him; he staid there to the last.
Pride! no; 'twas worse; 'twas sheer rusticity.
Thinking of him, six better men escaped me.
Don Marlo, Don Virgilio, Don Matteo,
Don Beppo, Don Simoni, Don Marziale,
Brother of Donna . . . stay . . . Donna Lucrezia,
Who ran away from home, and was pursued
Somewhat too late, caught, and let loose again,
A virgin, a pure virgin, to the last.
Ready to swear it were three witnesses,
Her father, and her husband, and herself:
No law-court can refuse three witnesses.

Beatrice. One surely is enough where honour is.
Prythee no more about her.

Margarita. Don Marziale
Call'd out the vile betrayer, but in vain;
He fled; and that same week another won
The lovely prize, and wears it to this day,
At least a part of it, a husband's part.

Beatrice. O Aja! what is this? what words are those?
But . . . hath she turn'd her face to God, and God
His face to her? May it be thus! Forgive,
O blessed Saint Remigio! and do thou
Thrice-blessed Virgin, purer than Heaven's light,
My wicked thought! Thy countenance was turn'd
One moment from me. In one moment sin
Bursts through our frail embankment, and engulphs
All superstructure human strength can raise.

Margarita. Mad art thou, or inspired?

Beatrice. Mad, mad, I was,
But now, with contrite heart, am calm again.

Margarita. I do believe I am as good as most,
If you are better, I am wiser, child!
I say as many prayers, and know more ways
Of happiness. Among these vacant I
Choose one . . . or two at most. There are indeed
Who think *one* better; and they may be right.
Our mother Church, long-suffering and indulgent,
Would rather tie two knots than sever one.
You ponder on these things without one word.

Beatrice. I dare not utter one; I scarce dare ponder.

Margarita. It is all right, if we will only think so.

Beatrice. True, true . . . but do not make me think about it.

Margarita. No, child, while there are those who think for us,
And have much broader backs and tougher hides,
Fireproof, and tongues that charm the devil off.
I like to take all good men at their word,
Without a scruple or suspicion. Thought
Is uphill work: many its paths, few smooth;
Let others trudge 'em while we two sit still . . .
Sit still we may, but not sit quite so grave.
I must not let you look at me demurely
On such a day as this. My lord last year
Admitted, as all other lords are wont,
His contadini, married and unmarried,
To dance upon the terrace with the great.
Will he to-night?

Beatrice. I hope he may.

Margarita. Why hope it?

The great are absent.

Beatrice. Yet without the great
The lowly may be happy, at small cost.

Good-morrow brightens the whole day to them,
Good-night brings early rest and hopeful dreams:
A friendly word, a gentle look, is more
From one above than twenty truer ones
From those who merit best the peasant's love.

Margarita. Whimsical girl! whimsical more than ever!
I have seen tears fall on this dimpled hand
When it had graspt the sunburnt hairy one,
And would not let it go, altho' I chided;
I have seen you stand a-tip-toe to return
The kiss imprinted on it, when the face
Was decently averted, whether man's
Or woman's; for the Count had been enraged.

Beatrice. Stern he may be; but cruel no, not that.

Margarita. Propriety! maintain propriety!
Minor transgressions every one forgives.
We must not let the humble spring too high.

Beatrice. Nor sink too low. God gave us hearts for theirs
To rest upon, and form'd them not of stone.

Margarita. This now, this brings me back again. Come, talk
Rationally with me . . . In this afternoon
My lord your father, as you know, returns.

Beatrice. Happier I may be; not much happier:
For when he saw me last, now some months since,

He took me on his knee, then pusht me off,
Suddenly, strangely; stamp, and left the room.

Margarita. Is this worth crying for?

Beatrice. I think it is.

Margarita. He may have thought of somebody at Rome
As pretty in his eyes, and not unlike.

Beatrice. Should he not love me more then for her sake?

Margarita. Men are odd creatures; what they should they don't,
And what they should not, sure enough, they do.
How would you like a stepmother?

Beatrice. If young
I should so like her! We would play together
All day, all night.

Margarita. Simpleton!

Beatrice. We would toss

Roses in summer, daffodils in spring,
Into each other's faces: if they struck
The eyes, O then what kisses! what protests
We were not hurt! The saints would all forgive.
I know the names of many good to us
Young girls, and mindful they were girls themselves.

Margarita. What fancy strikes you now?

Beatrice. One strange and wild.
Some say my mother lives. It can not be;
I have not seen her many many days,
A year almost.

Margarita. *Stepmother*, you should say.

Beatrice. *Stepmother!* what can that be else than mother?
She loved me, and wept over me. She rests,
(I trust) with God. Another may console me,
If she prevail with Him to send another.
My own, who waved me in her arms to sleep,
Could not have loved me better than the last.
When did she die? and where? Not here, we know;
No funeral was here; no sadder looks
Than usual in the poor good villagers . . .
Tell me: it happen'd while I was away?

Margarita. Useless to ask for what we cannot know,
And what, if we could know it, might do harm.
Nobody here dares stir where the Count's feet
Move softly, nobody his steps espy.

Beatrice. How prudent and how gentle the reproof!
But . . . could I hear my mother were alive!

Margarita. Your brothers, both are living, tho' afar,
She may be too, and nearer.*

* She lived imprisoned. * The whole family were kept separated.

Beatrice. Grant it, Heaven!
 Was it not wicked then to think of joy
 With one who soon might take her vacant place ;
 To think of smiles and games where tears were shed,
 Perhaps for me too, since mine also fell ?
 O ! it *was* wicked. Mother ! pray for me !
 Both mothers ! pray for me ! Let not my grief
 Disturb your bliss ! bear up my prayer on yours !

Margarita. Make me not dismal. Prayers are excellent
 In the right place. Seven are the sacraments,
 And of all seven, marriage is the best :
 This lies before you ; some are past, some wait.
 Let us return to thoughts far pleasanter ;
 I do not mean of saints and patronesses . .
 Another, and no saint, but a mama,
 Might wish you married ; sure your father would.

Beatrice. If ever I should marry . . but I feel
 I never shall . . so let me say no more.

Margarita. Were my ears open to catch wind and cold
 Like this, my Lady Beatrice ? Speak ;
 Say something ; to the purpose, if you can,
 But something.

Beatrice. Should one love me, may that one
 Be better, wiser, older !

Margarita. Hush ! hush ! hush !
 Wiser, and no harm done. Older ! God's peace !
 Well, certainly sixteen is somewhat young
 For bridegroom . . but no help for it, no harm,
 Past all endurance.

Beatrice. I may hope to live
 A few years longer ; and should Heaven bestow
 One many older yet, who truly loves,
 He will love wisely : he will see in me
 Much to correct with calmer eyes than mine.

Margarita. Aye ; some old creature. He would find out faults,
 Or make them for you. Never let young blood
 Be frozen, or (Madonna !) it will burst
 With such a crack as never shepherd heard
 • In early spring o'er tarn on Appennine.

Beatrice. We will not talk about what will not be . .

Margarita. Hark ! Was not that the bugle ? There again !
 Haste, haste upstairs . . dress yourself handsomely . .
 The Count is coming.

Beatrice. I will dress myself
 To please him ; but with arms about his neck
 First crave his blessing. Loose me ; let me run.

SCENE III.

COUNT, STEWARD, PEASANTS, BEATRICE.

Count. They might do something better, I should think,
Than sing o' Sundays. I am quite dog-tired
With this hard ride.

Steward. Indeed, my lord, you seem,
Despite of youth as ever on your side,
Wearied and ill at ease. The ride is long :
Strong as they are, alert as are the grooms,
The horses must have suffer'd this hot day.

Count. My horses are half-dead as well as I :
Bravely they mounted the last hill, however,
At sight of stable : all that was not smoke
Was froth ; the bits had burnt your hand to touch.

Steward. Too weak to battle with the flies, outstretcht
Lies every groom, his hat upon his face,
In the thin shade dropt from the grange's eaves.

Count. Swill'd with unwater'd wine.

Steward. No time or heart
Had they to lift the bucket from the well.

Count. I have a mind to whip them up again.
Their liveries look already like the litter,
The silver tarnisht, and the scarlet dim
As the last musty medlar of the year.
What can those idlers yonder want of me ?
What do they here ?

Steward. My gentle lord, permit
Those who have labour'd all the week apart,
To meet upon the blessedest of days
After due service ; to inquire how fares
The sick at home ; to slip the thin brass coin
Into the creviced box their priest shakes round,
That the soul suffer not for lack of mass.
What other day for distant friends to hear
The weal or woe that swells the breast with joy
Or sinks with grief ? In either case, it pours
Its fulness forth before His awful throne
Whose will they are.

Count. No preaching, sir, for me.
A mass, and welcome . . . twice or thrice a-year . . .
The Church requires it : what the Church requires
I do . . . or pay for what is left undone.

[*Tuning of instruments is heard.*
Crack me those strings ! stop me that fellow's breath
Who blows his fife so fitfully ! To hear

Those chords and canes, sure were enough without
 What they call tuning: that is worst of all . . .

Steward. Most gracious Signor Conte! it may please
 My Lady Beatrice.

Count. Let the fools
 Tickle their strings, and twist their lips. Set on!

[*Steward gives a sign. Peasants chant.*

Can any be both great and gay?
 Then may our lord be all his life:
 We halve it with him this one day,
 Who bring the lute to wed the fife.

We wish no feast: above our heads
 Swell the rich clusters of the vine:
 No lamps wish we: behold, there spreads
 Her robe of stars the jessamine.

We have not many songs to sing,
 And those we have are sadly dull;
 The livalier all were made for spring,
 When hopes are fresh and hearts are full.

We must not mind the cruel tale
 Old rhymers from old books relate,
 About the blood on nightingale,
 Who comes each year and sings her fate.

She now is gone; but happier love
 Attends the bird that yet remains;
 Attends the chaste, the constant dove,
 And soothes (if pains she know) her pains.

Sweet were the flowers May rear'd for June
 To kiss, and you to find and cull;
 Sweeter the fruits the vintage-moon
 Ripens, with gold-red radiance full.

O lady! much is yours to grant . . .
 Bride-cake, and ribands, rest within! . . .
 A smile to rule our dance we want,
 A nod to tune our violin.

To-morrow we prepare to heap
 With heavy grapes the creaking wane;
 The hearts the last year's bride made leap,
 For you this year shall leap again.

Beatrice. Kind friends! my father would not lose both
 daughters
 So near together. Some years yet must pass
 Before we think about it.

Count. Send them off.
 What insolence! to mix in my concerns!
 My Beatrice! thou wert ever fond

Of chattering with the peasants. Very wrong . .
Whimper not ; but look up.

Beatrice. Could it be wrong ?

Count. Early in childhood very wrong 'twere not,
And more another's fault than thine, perhaps . .
Nay, be not vext, my prettiest, overmuch.

Beatrice. Kind father ! this is, yes, indeed, too kind.

Count (to Steward). I would not have them look upon me now,
Or they might think me weak. They may have heard
The idle name I call'd her. Spake I loud ?
Did they ; dost thou imagine ? Plagues upon 'em !

Steward. All call her so.

Count. How dare they ?

Steward. They all love her ;
Fathers the most of all, I do believe.

Count. Send them away. Off with them all. Begone !
Off with you !

[*To the Steward.*] Give the fools some bread and wine,
And send them back.

Beatrice. Dear father ! let them stay
A little while. They may do more than I
In cheering you ! They may remind you, sir,
Of last year's festival. Look now, and see
If you miss any.

Count. Oxen, horses, mules,
We count.

Beatrice. Dear creatures ! yes.

Count. Enough, if those.

Beatrice. Here only two are wanting, girls I mean.
Beppina you permitted to be married,
And poor Cristina wastes away . .

Count. For love,
No doubt . . Let her too go.

Beatrice. Alas ! alas !
She will be gone, and soon. *She* caught the fever
From her old mother.

Count. Of what name ?

Beatrice. Her own,
The lame Cristina, who brought strawberries
From the hill-side, when sister and myself
Lay, as she lies, in fever.

Count. Was it she
Who made the butter ?

Beatrice. O, how glad I am
You recollect her !

Count. If her girl is sick

She can not make it : if she could, for me
 No butter from a house where folks are sick.
 Return we, Beatrice ; I am tired ;
 I have not slept since dinner.

Beatrice. Father dear !
 May sleep refresh you more than dinner did,
 And not be sent away from you so soon !

SCENE IV.

BEATRICE and the POPE.

Clement. Who art thou ? and what art thou ?

Beatrice. What I am
 I dare not utter, holy father ! Tears
 The bitterest ever shed from sleepless eye
 Announce me : none so wretched ! none so lost !

Clement. Thy name ?

Beatrice. 'Tis Beatrice.

Clement. Thy surname ?

Beatrice. Was . . .

Clement. Speak, thou sobbing fool ! Then speak will I.
Cenci. No doubt thou gladly wouldst forget
 Thy father's name ; it burns into thy soul ;
 Thou canst not shake it off, thou canst not quench it.
 Thou, ere thou camest hither, didst forget
 Thou wert his child. What wouldst thou urge thereon ?

Beatrice. Never did I forget he was my father ;
 He did forget . . forget . . I was his child.

Clement. Passionate tears drop from unholy lids
 More often than from holy. The best men
 May chide their children ; may dislike ; may hate . . .

Beatrice. Oh, had he hated me !

Clement. Perverse ! perverse !
 Bold interrupter of my speech, vouchsafed
 To lead thee from the wandering of thy thoughts.
 I would have said, where daughters are untoward,
 Chiefly where they are wanton, sires may hate.

Beatrice. Urge not that fault, O holy father ! spare it !

Clement. I thought so. I *will* spare it. There are more.
 Not only hast thou with that little hand
 Transfixt the breast which cherisht thee . . Ay, shriek !
 Stamp, spread the floor as 'twere with yellow straw . .
 Here are no youths to gather that fine gold,
 And treasure it, and gloat on it unseen.
 Not only hast thou done so, but hast torn

Thy ancient house from its foundation. Crime,
Like lightning, at one stroke pierces the roof
And penetrates the obscurest stone below.
Ay, writhe, groan, beat thy bosom, dim the light
Of those vain ringlets with those tears as vain ;
All, all, shall not avail thee.

Beatrice. Naught avail'd
They all, nor ever can avail me now.

Clement. I said it. But thy house must suffer shame,
Which timely full confession may avert.

Beatrice. Alas! alas! no, holy father! no,
But darken it for ever. Save a branch
From the sad rot that eats into it; bid
My sister live, my brother be absolved.

Clement. Thou fearest an impeachment of thy guilt
From kindred tongues.

Beatrice. Fear is too weak to reach
An agony like mine. I once did fear,
And when that fear was over, courage came
With heavenly power; courage that show'd the tomb,
But not dishonour opening it.

Clement. Again?
Maniac! again? Well shriekest thou *dishonour*,
And turnest (what none ever did before)
Thy back on me. Shame, shame, thou insolent!
I have no patience with a wench so wild,
So wicked . . . setting this last scorn aside . . .
Enough that I have heard thee; to forgive
Were impious.

Beatrice. Yet the Son of God besought
The Father to forgive his murderers.

Clement. Darest thou utter the word *Father*, wretch?

Beatrice. Yes, yes, *that* Father; and *that* Father hears:
That Father knows my innocence.

Clement. He knows it,
And I, and all the city. What then brought thee
Before this footstool, at our throne of grace?
For pardon? pardon of a parricide?
And opens not the earth beneath thy feet!

Beatrice. The earth, O holy father! open'd not
Beneath the cross, beneath man's impious feet,
When God's own Son was murder'd.

Clement. And thy tongue
Can speak of murder?

Beatrice. Could it were I guilty?
Ah! for that death none grieves so bitterly

As I do. Gone! gone! O unhappy man,
With all his sins upon his head . . . the last,
Worst, unrepented.

Clement. *Thou shalt have good time*
For *thy* repentance of one worse than all . . .
Parricide.

Beatrice. Holy father! say not so!
It tortures me.

Clement. Worse tortures there await
Thy dainty limbs.

Beatrice. Worse tortures they have caused
Already than man's wrath can now inflict.

Clement. We shall see that, thou murderous miscreant!

Beatrice. Spare, holy father! spare reproachful words.

Clement. Audacious! vengeance, not reproach, is mine.
Justice, God's justice, I pronounce against thee.

Beatrice. Ah! be it but God's justice! be it His,
And there is mercy; else what soul could live?

Clement. Audacious! here none argues. When I speak,
I breathe God's spirit and proclaim His law.

Beatrice. Forgive an inadvertence in a girl
Who hath not graspt the flowers of sixteen springs,
Nor held sweet converse with the riper age
Of girls two fingers higher, nor learnt the ways
Of courtly life; but ever bent the head
O'er breviary, and closed the gayer leaves
Left open to engage her, which had taught
Perhaps some better customs than appear'd.

Clement (*pondering abstractedly*). An inadvertence peradventure yea.

Never a parricide. . . Peace! peace! Within
These walls unseemly are such ecstasies.

Beatrice. Pity me, blessed Virgin! pity me!
There is none other careth for my grief,
Thou carest for all sorrowers. Hear me, hear me,
In my last anguish.

Clement. This is not thy last. •
Halters and pulleys may uplift those arms
Again, which thou upliftest impiously
To the most blessed. Hope from her is none
Before confession of thy heinous crime.
I, I myself will hear it (out of grace
To that nobility thy father bore)
And may remit, in part, the penalty.
Confess, thou obstinate!

Beatrice. I will not bear

False witness . . no, not even against myself . .
For God will also hear it.

Clement. Get thee gone,
Parricide! hie thee from my sight. The rack
Awaits thee.

Beatrice. Holy father! I have borne
That rack already which tears filial love
From love parental. Is there worse behind?

Clement. Questionest thou God's image upon earth?

Beatrice. Sire! I have question'd God himself, and askt
How long shall innocence remain unheard?

Clement. Say thou art guilty, and thy bonds are loose.

Beatrice. Oh, holy father! guilty I am not.

Clement. Die in thy sin then . . unrepentant, curst!

Beatrice. My sins are washt away, not by the blood
Of him whose name to utter were opprobrious,
But by His blood who gives you power to rule
And me to suffer.

God! Thy will be done!

SCENE V.

Citizens at a distance from the scaffold.

Citizen. Wouldst thou not rather look than talk, good man?

Old Man. I can talk yet, my sight grows somewhat dim;
Beside, 'tis said that they who see an angel
Live not long after. Surely there stands one
In purest white, immovable as heaven,
Her hair resplendent, not with stars, but suns . .
I would, but dare not . . yes, once more must gaze.

Another Citizen. Do they still torture her? At times she
quakes,

While they seem only speaking very mildly.

Another. Ay, they speak mildly when they torture most.

Another. I catch no pulley near, no red-hot iron.

The Next. The pulley may have crackt, the iron cool'd,
And they alone who suffer it must see it.

Woman. How pale she looks!

Another. She always did look pale,
They tell me; all the saints, and all the good,
And all the tender-hearted, have lookt pale.
Upon the Mount of Olives was there one
Of dawn-red hue even before that day?
Among the mourners under Calvary
Was there a cheek the rose had rested on?

Old Woman. Is she alive or dead? Oh! I would give
Half my day's meal to be as tall as you,
And see her over all those heads. Speak, tell me.

Another. She looks so pale, so calm, she may be dead.

Third. But can the dead sit upright? Tell me that.

Another. When they are bound, ankles and throat, they may.
Nardi, who stole the Virgin's rosary
From her own fingers, stood right up, although
Ribs were alone of all his bones unbroken,
But every muscle making their amends,
Doubled in size, and swell'd like snakes about them.

Woman. To rob the Virgin of her rosary!
O what a thief was he!

Another Woman. Those were true snakes
That lookt like muscles coiling round his bones,
And whence they came, at dead of night, we know.
Ave Maria! were I rich as thou,
Thou shouldst not long look for thy rosary.

Fourth (to a Citizen). Were there blood-spots about her?
couldst thou spy?

Citizen. There were blood spots about the blessed cross;
Yea; but whose were they? Woe betide the spillers!

Third Woman. O the good man! he thinks upon the cross!
Then thou couldst see her?

Citizen. I could see no more
Than marble statue sees; my eyes were stiff.
Prythee now let them drop their heaviness
Upon this waste, this scorching waste, of woe;
Nor stop them, woman, with that idle tongue.

Third Woman. O the rude man!

Fourth Woman. His huge arms scatter us,
Thick as we stand, beating that brawny breast.
Murrain upon those priests!

Citizen. They stood around,
As these do here.

Fourth Woman. Murrain on these, on all
Tapsters of children's blood.

Third Woman. Save good priest Aldi;
Hé lets me off for little week by week.
O what a wail! Could it be hers? It fills
The streets, it overflows the city walls,
The churches and their altars, with one wave,
Huge as the Red Sea heav'd upon the host
Of that proud king . . . who was he? . . . Now again
What silence!

Another. Break it not. Let man's tears fall,

Reverently let them fall, never in shame,
 On woman's blood : were yon feet still which stamp,
 From agony of grief and anger, mine
 In this dread pause were heard to splash the stones.
 Could not, O Christ ! thy saving blood save hers ?

[*Outcries before the scaffold : bell.*

Are those shrieks hers ?

Another Citizen. Which shrieks, among ten thousand ?

Fool ! when all daughters, mothers, fathers, cry
 In this whole piazza, thinkest thou a few
 Expiring shrieks and sobs can come distinct ?

Another. Those must be . . . hers must those be.

Another.

So far off,

She could not make us hear.

Another Yet, Heaven is farther,

And hears her, the sweet innocent ! Again !
 Oh ! that sound must have been the scourge that smote her.

Another Woman. O Christ ! O crucified Redeemer ! hear,
 Hear that long cry lessening for lack of breath !

Another. The very priests, the very cardinals,
 Are hardly mute.

Citizen. They curse the cruelty,
 Thro' fear, not thro' compunction. O that each
 Partook her sufferings. One poor girl hath borne
 More than enough to crack the joints of all,
 Cased as they are in fatness. But their day
 May come, even upon earth.

Another Citizen. One day will come.

Not upon earth . . . one day for them and her !

Woman. Poor soul ! her prayers will save them.

Another Woman. God is just :

His mercy is but for the merciful.

Hush ! Holy Virgin ! the poor child is dead !

Another Woman. Is that the passing bell ?

Another Woman. Down on your knees
 All of you !

Another Woman. What a silence ! every stroke
 Clear as within the belfry : sighs are heard
 Half a street off. Now there is voice for prayer ;
 And hundreds pray who never pray'd before . . .

Another Woman. For they have children. Shower, ye saints
 above,

Blessings upon her ! Comfort her among you !

Many cry. Blessings upon her !

Citizen.

Curses !

Another.

Upon whom ?

Citizen. Him who condemn'd her.

Fourth Citizen. 'Twas the holy father.

Third Citizen. Were it the devil I would curse the devil.

Fourth Citizen. The stroke that fell on her may fall on you.

Third Citizen. Speed it! I should be saved in following her;
Even I might kiss those beauteous feet and weep . .

Alas! . . on that ractt corse, in Paradise.

Sbirro. Silence! insensate! reprobate! Come out;
Thy words, thou knowest, violate God's image
Here upon earth.

Third Citizen. My words? Your deeds, say rather.

Behold it. [*The corpse is carried by.*

Rest, O daughter! rest in peace!

Another Citizen. Spake she no words at all?

Another. These words she spake,
Caught by the nearest, then the farthest off,
And striking every breast throughout the square,
Rapid as lightning, withering too like that.

Another. Well, well . . the words?

Reply. Hast thou alone not heard?
Hear now then. No confession; not a breath.

Old Woman. Poor sinful soul!

Citizen. They urged: she only said . .
And scarcely one or two could hear the sound,
It was so feeble . . for her heart was broken
Worse than her limbs . .

Former Citizen. What said she?

Last Citizen. Wouldst thou torture
Worse than yon paid ones?

Former Citizen. Hold thy peace! The two
Confessors urged her on each side to speak
While time was left her, and while God might hear,
And leave the rest to them. She thus replied . .
'My father's honour will'd my father's death:
He could not live; no, nor could I. Now strike.
Strike, and let questioning's worse torture cease.'
The vizer'd struck: a dull sound shook the block:
The head roll'd from it. Mercy on her soul!
Men have been brave, but women have been braver.

JAMES II. OF SCOTLAND AND ASSASSINS.

King. Uncle! and thou too with these murderers!
Nay, hide not thy grey head behind that door
Half broken down. See I thee, cousin Robert?
Thee, with a dagger in thy grasp? the intent
Is plain. I ask no grace of thee, for thou
Who never hast known love canst not know pity.

Earl. If thou hadst not, this realm had never stoopt
Before a sceptre in a stranger's hand.

Graham. We come to vindicate our country's rights
And have no time to parley.

Earl. Thou, my liege,
Hast injured all of us. What lord is safe
In his own castle from thy vengeful laws?

Graham. Answer us that.

King. What honest traveller
Is safe from rapine where your wide domains
And power usurpt from sovereignty extend.

Graham. Are there no ladies in this land of ours
Worthy to mate with any king?

King. Yea, many.

Graham. Why then should England force upon the throne
An alien brood.

King. Cease, villain! I was free.
So are ye all in this; rich, poor, alike;
Are kings alone debarr'd? I chose a mate
Of royal blood, not for her royalty,
Unless such royalty as God imparts
When he gives grace and virtue; these are Jane's
Would ye slay *her* too?

Earl. We war not with women.

King. Ye war against them when ye strike the breast
They cling to.

Earl. Thou shouldst have been still her minstrel.
Is it becoming in a king to ride
About the country with a single groom,
And crouch thro' half-rooft cottages, and ask
The creatures to complain of aught amiss?
As if they had not plenty to blab out
Against their lords; are they not our born serfs?
Answer us that.

King. I am God's bailiff, sir,
Not yours, to Him alone I give account.

Graham. That shalt thou speedily; the book is closed;
Take it him.

Earl. Well done, Graham, strike again.

Graham. He folds his cloak around him so, and lifts
So high both upright arms, there is no place.

Earl. Well, well, methinks we have done enough to-day.
He speaks tho'.

King. Robert! art *thou* here?

Robert. My liege!
Here am I. What may be our lord's commands?

King. Thou at least art no robber . . . take my ring . . .
Give it to *her* . . . but first wipe off the blood
If there be any on it.

Graham. She has one,
And can not want another: ruby rings
Suit ill for marriages, and worse for deaths.

Robert. Peace, Graham, peace.
Sire, your behest is sacred.

King. Robert! thou art again for this half-hour
What thou wast when we both were only boys.

Robert. Sire, your breath fails you.
(*Aside*) Faith! and mine fails too.

King. Give it her . . . call some holy man . . . haste . . . go.

ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS.

Few have obtained the privilege of entering Shakespeare's garden, and of seeing him take turn after turn, quite alone, now nimbly, now gravely, on his broad and lofty terrace.

Let us never venture where he is walking, whether in deep meditation or in buoyant spirits. Enough is it for us to ramble and loiter in the narrower paths below, and to look up at the various images which, in the prodigality of his wealth, he has placed in every quarter.

Before you, reader, are some scattered leaves gathered from under them: carefuller hands may arrange and compress them in a book of their own, and thus for a while preserve them, if rude children do not finger them first and tamper with their fragility.

W. S. L.

SCENE THE FIRST . . .	SOOTHSAYER AND ANTONY.
„ SECOND . . .	SOOTHSAYER AND CLEOPATRA.
„ THIRD . . .	ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.
„ FOURTH . . .	CLEOPATRA. CHARMIAN. IRAS.
„ FIFTH . . .	OCTAVIUS. MECÆNAS. GALLUS.
„ SIXTH . . .	ANTONY AND DOLABELLA.
„ SEVENTH . . .	ANTONY AND AGRIPPA.
„ EIGHTH . . .	OCTAVIUS. AGRIPPA. CÆSARION. MECÆNAS.
„ NINTH . . .	DOLABELLA. CÆSARION. SCOPAS.
„ TENTH . . .	EROS AND ANTONY.
„ ELEVENTH . . .	OFFICER. OCTAVIUS. MECÆNAS. GALLUS.
„ TWELFTH . . .	OCTAVIUS AND OCTAVIA.

SCENE THE FIRST.

SOOTHSAYER and ANTONY.

Soothsayer. Speak it I must. Ill are the auguries.

Antony. Ill ever are the auguries, O priest,
To those who fear them: at one hearty stroke
The blackest of them scud and disappear.
Now, not a word of any less than good
To Cleopatra.

Soothsayer. 'Twas at her command
I hasten'd to consult them.

Antony. Rightly done
To follow her commands; not rightly comes
Whate'er would grieve her; this thou must withhold.

Soothsayer. Not this, not this: her very life may hang
Upon the event foretold her.

Antony. What is that?
Announced then is the accursed augury
So soon?

Soothsayer. She waited at the temple-door
With only one attendant, meanly drest,
That none might know her; or perhaps the cause
Was holier; to appease the offended Gods.

Antony. Which of them can she ever have offended?
She who hath lavisht upon all of them
Such gifts, and burnt more incense in one hour
Before her Isis, than would wrap in smoke
A city at mid-day! The keenest eye
Of earth or heaven could find in her no guile,
No cruelty, no lack of duty.

Soothsayer. True;
Yet fears she one of them, nor knows she which,
But Isis is the one she most suspects.

Antony. Isis! her patroness, her favourite?

Soothsayer. Even so! but they who patronize may frown
At times, and draw some precious boon away.

Antony. I deem not thus unworthily of Gods;
Indeed I know but Jupiter and Mars;
Each hath been ever on my side, and each
Alike will prosper me, I trust, to-morrow.

Soothsayer. But there are others, guardian Gods of Egypt;
Prayers may propitiate them, with offerings due.

Antony. I have forgotten all my prayers.

Soothsayer. No need,
When holier lips pronounce them.

Antony. As for offerings,
There shall be plenty on the day's success.

Soothsayer. Merit it.

Antony. Do your Gods or ours mind that?
Merit! and where lies merit?

Soothsayer. In true faith
On auguries.

Antony. Birds hither thither fly,
And heard there have been from behind the veil
Voices not varying much from yours and mine.

SCENE THE SECOND.

SOOTHSAYER *and* CLEOPATRA.

Soothsayer. Our lord Antonius wafts away all doubt
Of his success.

Cleopatra. What! against signs and tokens?

Soothsayer. Even so!

Cleopatra. Perhaps he trusts himself to Hercules,
Become of late progenitor to him.

Soothsayer. Ah! that sweet smile might bring him back; he
once

Was flexible to the bland warmth of smiles.

Cleopatra. If Hercules is hail'd by men below
For strength and goodness, why not Antony?
Why not succeed as lawful heir? why not
Exchange the myrtle for the poplar crown?

ANTONY *enters.* SOOTHSAYER *goes.*

Cleopatra. Antony! is not Cæsar now a god?

Antony. We hear so.

Cleopatra. Nay, we know it. Why not thou?
Men would not venture then to strike a blow
At thee: the laws declare it sacrilege.

Antony. Julius, if I knew Julius, had been rather
First among men than last among the Gods.

Cleopatra. At least put on thy head a kingly crown.

Antony. I have put on a laurel one already;
As many kingly crowns as should half cover
The Lybian desert are not worth this one.

Cleopatra. But all would bend before thee.

Antony. 'Twas the fault
Of Cæsar to adopt it; 'twas his death.

Cleopatra. Be then what Cæsar is.

O Antony!

To laugh so loud becomes not state so high.

Antony. He is a star, we see; so is the hair
Of Berenice: stars and Gods are rife.
What worth, my love, are crowns? Thou givest pearls,
I give the circlet that encloses them.
Handmaidens don such gear, and valets snatch it
Sportively off, and toss it back again.

Cleopatra. But graver men gaze up with awful eyes . .

Antony. And never gaze at that artificer
Who turns his wheel and fashions out his vase
From the Nile clay! 'Tis easy work for him;
Easy was mine to turn forth kings from stuff

As vile and ductile : he still plies his trade,
 But mine, with all my customers, is gone.
 Ever by me let enemies be awed,
 None else : bring round me many, near me few,
 Keeping afar those shaven knaves obscene
 Who lord it with humility, who press
 Men's shoulders down, glue their two hands together,
 And cut a cubit off, and tuck their heels
 Against the cushion mother Nature gave.

Cleopatra. Incomprehensible ! incorrigible !
 O wretch ! if queens were ever taught to blush,
 I should at such unseemly phrase as thine.
 I think I must forgive it.

What ! and take
 Before I grant ? Again ! You violent man !
 Will you for ever drive me thus away ?

SCENE THE THIRD.

ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA.

Antony. What demon urged thy flight ?

Cleopatra.

The demon Love.

I am a woman, with a woman's fears,
 A mother's, and, alas O Antony !
 More fears than these.

Antony.

Of whom ?

Cleopatra.

Ask not *of* whom

But ask *for* whom, if thou must ask at all,
 Nor knowest nor hast known. Yes, I did fear
 For my own life . . . ah ! lies it not in thine ?
 How many perils compast thee around !

Antony. What are the perils that are strange to me ?

Cleopatra. Mine thou couldst not have seen when swiftest
 oars,

Attracted by the throne and canopy,
 Pounced at me only, numerous as the waves ;
 Couldst not have seen my maidens throwing down
 Their fans and posies (piteous to behold !)
 That they might wring their hands more readily.
 I was too faint myself to still their cries.

Antony (aside). I almost thought her blameable.

(*To CLEOPATRA.*)

The Gods

So will'd it. Thou despondest . . . too aware
 The day is lost.

Cleopatra. The day may have been lost,
But other days, and happier ones, will come.
Antony. Never: when those so high once fall, their weight
Keeps them for ever down.

Cleopatra. Talk reasonably,
And love me as . . . till now . . . it should be more,
For love and sorrow mingle where they meet.

Antony. It shall be more. Are these last kisses cold?

Cleopatra. Nor cold are they nor shall they be the last.

Antony. Promise me, Cleopatra, one thing more.

Cleopatra. 'Tis promis't, and now tell me what it is.

Antony. Rememberest thou this ring?

Cleopatra. Dost thou remember
The day, my Antony, when it was given?

Antony. Day happiest in a life of many happy,
And all thy gift.

Cleopatra. 'Tis call'd the richest ruby,
The heaviest, and the deepest, in the world.

Antony. The richest certainly.

Cleopatra. And not the deepest
And broadest? Look! it hides all this large nail,
And mine are long ones if not very wide;
Now let me see if it don't cover yours
As wide again! there! it would cover two.
Why smile you so?

Antony. Because I know its story.

Cleopatra. Ha! then you have not lost all memory quite.
I told it you. The king of Pontus sent it
When dying to my father, warning him
By letter that there was a charm in it
Not to be trifled with.

Antony. It shall not be.

Cleopatra. But tell me now the promise I must make;
What has the ring to do with it?

Antony. All, all.

Know, Cleopatra, this is not one ruby.

Cleopatra. The value then is smaller.

Antony. Say not so,
Remark the rim.

Cleopatra. The gold is thin, I see.

Antony. And seest thou it will open? It contains
Another jewel, richer than itself.

Cleopatra. Impossible! my Antony! for rubies
Are richer than all other gems on earth.

Antony. Now, my sweet trifier, for thy promise.

Cleopatra. Speak.

By all the Powers above and all below,
I will perform thy bidding, even to death.

Antony. To death it goes; not until after mine.

Cleopatra. I kiss the precious charm. Methinks an odour
Of almond comes from it. How sweet the flower
Of death!

Antony. 'Tis painless death, 'tis sudden too.

Cleopatra. Who could wish more, even were there more to
wish?

With us there is not.

Antony. Generous, pious girl!
Daughter of Ptolemies! thou hast not won
A lower man than they. Thy name shall rise
Above the pyramids, above the stars,
Nations yet wild shall that name civilize,
And glorious poets shake their theatres,
And stagger kings and emperors with applause.

Cleopatra. I was not born to die; but I was born
To leave the world with Antony, and will.

Antony. The greatest of all eastern kings died thus,
The greater than all eastern kings thus died.
O glorious forgerman who couldst rivet down
Refractory crowds by thousands, and make quake
Sceptres like reeds! we want not here thy voice
Or thy example. Antony alone
And queenly pride, tho' Love were dumb, would do.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

CLEOPATRA. CHARMIAN. IRAS.

Cleopatra. At the first entrance of your lord, before
He ordered you, before he spake a word,
Why did ye run away?

Charman. I was afraid,
Never so in my life; he lookt so fierce
He fear'd his own wild eyes, he placed one hand
(His right) across them on lowered brow, his left
Waved us away as would a hurricane
A palm-tree on the desert.

Cleopatra (to IRAS). And wert thou,
Iras, so terrified?

Iras. Not I indeed;
My lady, never man shall frighten *me*.

Cleopatra. Thou silly creature! I have seen a mouse
Do it.

Iras. A mouse is quite another thing.

Charmian (*hesitating*). Our lord and master . . .

Cleopatra. What of Antony?

Charmian. Octavius . . .

Cleopatra. Who? Our lord and master he?

He never shall be mine . . . that is to say . . .

Charmian. What! lady?

Cleopatra. I forget . . . 'twas not worth saying.

Charmian! where hast thou been this last half-hour?

Charmian. In my own room.

Cleopatra. So fearful?

Charmian. Far more sad.

Cleopatra. Where, *Iras*, thou?

Iras. I wanted to report

To my sweet lady what I might espy.

Cleopatra. And what have those long narrow eyes espied?

Iras. All.

Cleopatra. 'Twas done speedily; but what is all?

Army and fleet from any terrace roof

Are quite discernible, the separate men

Nowhere.

Iras. My heart had told me what delight
Its queen would feel to hear exactly how
The leaders look.

Cleopatra. And how then did they look?

Tell me: some might have ridden near enough
The town to judge by, where the sight is sharp.

Iras. Merciful *Isis!* ridden! and so close!

Horses are frightful, horses kick and rear
And whinny, full of wickedness; 'twere rash
To venture nigh them.

Cleopatra. There are things more rash.

Iras. Quieter creatures than those generals are
Never were seen.

Cleopatra. Barbarians! not a word

About them, *Iras*, if thou lovest me;
They would destroy my city, seize my realm,
And ruin him we live for.

Iras. Surely no;

It were a pity; none are so unkind;
Cæsar the least of all.

Cleopatra. Ah simple child!

Thou knowest not his heart.

Iras. I do indeed.

Cleopatra. No, nor thy own.

Iras. His better; for of mine . . .

I never askt a question. He himself
Told me how good he would be.

Cleopatra. He told thee ?

What ! hast thou seen him ?

Iras. Aye, and face to face,

Close as our lord's to yours.

Cleopatra. O impudence !

Iras. But he would have it so ; just like our lord.

Cleopatra. Impudent girl ! thou shalt be whipt for this.

Iras. I am too old ; but lotuses don't hurt

Like other things ; they cool the strokes they give.

Cleopatra. I have no patience with thee. How I hate
That boy Octavius !

Dared he touch thy cheek ?

Iras. He could ; he only whispered in my ear,
Holding it by the ring.

Cleopatra. Whispered ? what words ?

Iras. The kindest.

Cleopatra. Ah ! no doubt ! but what were they ?

Iras. He said, The loveliest creature in the world . . .

Cleopatra. The vulgar brute ! Our ferrymen talk so :
And couldst thou listen, *Iras*, to such speech ?

Iras. Only when people praise our gracious queen.

Cleopatra. Me ? this of me ? Thou didst thy duty, child :
He might have fail'd in what he would express.

The birds have different voices, yet we bear
To hear those sing which do not sing the best.

Iras ! I never thought thee half so wise.

And so, he said those gentle words of *me* ?

Iras. All, and forgot to kiss me when I vow'd
I would report them faithfully.

Cleopatra. Is there

Resemblance in him to that marble image

I would have broken, but my Antony

Seiz'd both my hands ?

Iras. Alas ! that image wants

The radiant eyes, and hair more radiant still,

Such as Apollo's may have been if myrrh

Were sprinkled into its redundant waves.

Cleopatra. He must be tenderer than I fancied him
If this be true.

Iras. He spoke those very words.

Cleopatra. *Iras !* 'tis vain to mind the words of men ;
But if he lookt as thou hast said he lookt,

I think I may put trust in him.

Iras.

And see him ?

Cleopatra. I am not hasty.

Irás. If you could but see him!

Cleopatra. Call Charmian: I am weary: I must rest
Awhile.

Irás. My sweetest lady! could not I,
Who have been used to it almost a year,
Help you as well as Charmian? While you sleep
Could I not go again and bid him haste
To comfort you?

Cleopatra. Is the girl mad? Call Charmian.

(*To CHARMIAN.*)

Charmian! hath Irás tickled thee away
From moping in thy chamber? thou hast sped.

Charmian. Irás is growing bold.

Cleopatra. I was bold too

While I was innocent as Irás is.

Charmian. Our lady looks more flurried than deprest.

Cleopatra. I am not flurried, I am not deprest.

[*After a pause.*]

Believest thou in Cæsar's generosity?

Charmian. I know it.

Cleopatra. In what matter?

Charmian. Half the guards

And half the ministers of state have shown
Signs of his bounty to the other half.

Cleopatra. Gifts are poor signs of bounty. Do not slaves
Slip off the gold-black pouches from their necks
Untied but to buy other slaves therewith?
Do not tame creatures lure into the trap
Their wilder brethren with some filthy bait?
All want companions, and the worst the most.
I am much troubled: even hope troubles me.

Charmian. I dare not ask our lady why she weeps.

Cleopatra. Cæsarion, my first-born, my dearest one,
Is safely shielded by his father's name:
He loves his brothers, he may save them both,
He only can: I would fain take the advice
Of Dolabella, fain would venture him
In Cæsar's camp: the father's voice and look
Must melt him, for his heart is not so hard
That he could hurt so beautiful a child;
Nay, what man's is?

Charmian. But trust not the two younger;
Their father will not help them in their need.

Cleopatra. Cæsarion in fit hour will plead for them.
Charmian, what ponderest thou? what doubttest thou?

Charmian. Cæsar I doubt, and Dolabella more ;
And what I pondered were your words : *It may be*
That givers are not always benefactors.

Cleopatra. I have one secret, but keep none from thee :
He loves me !

Charmian. All do.

Cleopatra. Yes, but some have power.

Charmian. Power, as most power is, gain'd by treachery.

Cleopatra. Whom,
In Egypt, Europe, Asia, can I trust ?

Charmian. Few, nor those few too far, nor without watch.

Cleopatra. Not Charmian ?

Charmian. Bid her die ; here ; now ; and judge.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

OCTAVIUS. MECÆNAS. GALLUS.

Octavius. Is Dolabella to be trusted ?

Mecænas. Youth
There is on Dolabella's side ; with youth
Comes always eloquence where women are.

Octavius. Gallus is honester and prudenter.

Mecænas. But Gallus is the older by some years.

Octavius. A poet says, Love at odd hours hath smiled,
And covered with his pinions sportively,
Where he espied some hairs that seem'd like Time's
Rather than his.

Mecænas. There must have been but few,
Or else the poet dreamt it.

Octavius. Who comes hither ?

Mecænas. Not Dolabella, but the better man.

Octavius. Welcome, brave Gallus, opportunely met.
We were debating how to lure that dove
Of Antony's, now in her cote, a tower,
From which we would not frighten her away,
But tempt her down.

Gallus. It might be difficult.

Octavius. Unless thou aidest us, indeed it might.

Mecænas. What sport 'twould be to see her mate descend
And catch him too !

Gallus. Nor this more easily.

Octavius. To Gallus all is easy.

Mecænas. Pleasant too
Would such task be.

Gallus. No better judge of pleasures
Than Cilnius here; but ours are not alike.

Octavius. Gallus! one word apart. We need thee much.

Gallus. What! after Egypt won?

Octavius. Antony lives!

Gallus. Beaten, disgraced, imprisoned, his own jailer.

Mecænas. Defying us, however, by the power
The queen his mistress gives him with her name . .

Gallus. Worthless as his.

Mecænas. Were she within our reach
We soon might bring him down.

Gallus. What! lower?

Octavius. Even yet?

Gallus. She might succumb, and must, by promising
That Cæsar's son, after her death, shall reign.

Mecænas. A prudent thought. But will she give up Antony
Unless she hear it from the giver's mouth?
There is one anxious to deserve the grace
Of princes. . Dolabella could persuade
The queen to trust herself to him for Cæsar.

Gallus. I doubt it.

Mecænas. Doubt his honour, not his skill.
He could not keep the secret that he loves,
And that he often in times past hath seen her.

Gallus. He loves her? then, by all the Gods! he never
Will win her for another than himself.
Beside, he was the friend of Antony,
And shared with him the toils at Mutina.
Altho' no eagle, he would soar aloft
Rather than bow for others, like an owl,
The smallest of the species, hooded for it.
Who knows not Dolabella?

Mecænas. Thou hast sense,
Comeliness, courage, frankness. Antony
Tore from thy couch the fairest girl in Rome.

Gallus. And let him have her, let him have her, man.
What then?

Mecænas. There are who would retaliate.

Gallus. The girl hath left no mark upon my memory . .

Mecænas. Or mine, beside a few soft lines; but mine
Retains them, mindful of a friend who sang,
Unless my singing mars the harmony,
I thought it once an idle tale
That lovely woman's faith could fail;
At last I said, It may be true,
Lycoris, of them all but you.

And now you leave me! and you go
 O'er pinnacles of Alpine snow.
 Another leads you (woe is me!)
 Across that grim and ghastly sea!
 Let him protect those eyes from sleet,
 And guide and chafe those tender feet,
 And fear for every step you tread,
 Then hardly will I wish him dead.
 If ice-barb'd shafts that ring around
 By his neglect my false one wound,
 O may the avenging Gods for this
 Freeze him to death in the abyss!

Gallus. They have reserved him for a sadder fate.
 Sleep, without painful dreams that crush the breast,
 Sleep, without any joyous ones that come
 Only to mock the awaken'd, comes unfelt
 And unsolicited among those cliffs
 Of ice perennial.

Antony hath dreamt
 His broken dream, and wakened to despair:
 I never wisht him that; the harm I wisht him
 Was when my youth was madder than his age.
 He stood a prouder and a better man
 At Mutina, when Famine walkt the camp,
 When I beheld him climb up painfully
 A low and crumbling crag, where servises
 Hung out above his head their unripe fruit:
 That was my day. Some grains of sodden maize
 I brought and offered him: he struck them down.

Octavius. Rejoice at pride so humbled.

Gallus. I rejoice
 At humbled pride, at humbled valour no.

Octavius. But those offending Gods whom thou invokedst
 Stand now before thee and demand why call'd.

Gallus. They know: they pardon such irresolution
 As pity, and not cowardice, persuades.
 One woman has betraid me; not one woman
 Will I betray.

Mecenas. O that poetic mind!

Gallus. Where others sneer, Mecenas only smiles.

Mecenas. Such is my nature, and I widely err,
 Gallus, if such be not thy nature too.

Octavius. Did then Lycoris, that wild girl, prefer
 The unworthy to the worthy, the most rude
 To the most gentle, scampering beyond reach?
 Let her repair her fault: no danger here

That angry skies turn coral lips to slate
Or icicles make limp the runaway.

Gallus. Those days are over. He, who won the prize
May say as much and add a little more.

Octavius. Laughest thou not to see the tables turn'd?
The little queen who fascinates her fool
Is now as lovely as Lycoris was,
And never ran away from any man:
Fain would I see that roysterer's spirit broken,
And she alone can do it: help her on.

Gallus. In any such attempt, in such a place
Fortune would baffle me.

Octavius. Then baffle her;
She baffles only those who hesitate.

Gallus. The queen, we hear, takes refuge in the depths
Below the palace, where but reptiles lie.

Octavius. Indeed! what! scorpions, serpents?

Gallus. Haply these.

Octavius. Poor woman! they may bite her! let my fears
Prove not prophetic!

Now, my friend, adieu!
Reflect upon our project; turn it over.

[GALLUS goes.

These poets look into futurity
And bring us glimpses from it more than dreams.
Asps! But the triumph then without the queen!
Alas! was ever mortal so perplexed!
I doubt if your friend Gallus can be won.

Mecenas. All may be won, well handled; but the ear
Is not the thing to hold by. Show men gold,
Entangle them in Gallic torquises,
Tie stubborn necks with ropes of blushing pearls,
Seat them on ivory from the realms of Ind,
Augur them consulates, proconsulates,
Make their eyes widen into provinces,
And, gleaming further onward, tetrarchies.

Octavius. It strikes me now that we may offer Gallus
The prefecture of Egypt.

Mecenas. Some time hence:
Better consult Agrippa.

Octavius. None more trusty.
Yet our Agrippa hath strange whims; he dotes
Upon old Rome, the Rome of matted beards
And of curt tunics; of old Rome's old laws,
Worm-eaten long, now broken and swept off.
He stands forth high in station and esteem.

[Pausing.

Mecenas. So should the man who won the world for thee.

Octavius. I must not play with him who won so much
From others ; he might win as much from me :
I fear his fortunes.

Mecenas. Bind them with your own.
Becoming are thy frowns, my dear Octavius,
Thy smiles alone become thee better : trust
Thy earliest friend and fondest : take not ill
My praises of Agrippa, tried in war
And friendship.

Octavius. And for this wouldst thou, my Cilnius,
Send him away from me ?

Mecenas. Thyself did fear
His popularity : all Rome applauds
His valour, justice, moderation, mercy.

Octavius. Not one word more.

Mecenas. One word I have to speak,
And speak it I will now. He must away.

Octavius. Can Cilnius then be jealous of Agrippa ?

Mecenas. No ; crown him king and give him provinces,
But give him not to clench the heart of Rome.

Octavius. I could make kings and unmake kings by scores,
But could not make nor unmake one Agrippa.

Mecenas. Well spoken ! wisely ! worthily ! No praise
Can equipoise his virtues, kings may lay
Their tributes on the carpet of his throne
And cities hope to honour whom they serve,
The royal mantle would obscure Agrippa.

Octavius. I would be generous, but be cautious too.

Mecenas. Then grant him all beyond the sight of Rome ;
Men's eyes would draw him thither tho' his will
Hung back : thus urged the steadiest might give way.

Octavius. I hate suspicion and suspicious men.
Gallus I fancied was the bitterest foe
Of Antony, his rival, and successful,
Then he should hate him worse than I.

Mecenas. But empire
Is more worth hatred than a silly girl,
Every day to be won and lost again.

Octavius. Our Gallus is weak-minded to forgive
So easily.

Mecenas. I find that on the hearth
Where lie love's embers there lie hatred's too,
Equally cold and not to be stir'd up.

Octavius. I do not think, my Cilnius, thou hast felt
Love but for me ; I never knew thee hate.

Mecænas. It is too troublesome ; it rumples sleep,
It settles on the dishes of the feast,
It bites the fruit, it dips into the wine ;
Then rather let my enemy hate me
Than I hate him.

Octavius. We must look round. What think you ?
Is Dolabella to be trusted ?

Mecænas. Try.

Octavius. I wish this country settled, us return'd.
Resolved am I to do what none hath done,
And only Julius ever purposed doing ;
Resolved to render Rome, beneath my rule,
A second Alexandria. Corinth, Carthage,
One autumn saw in stubble ; not a wreath
Enough to crown a capital was left,
Nor capital to crown its pillar, none ;
But here behold what glorious edifices !
What palaces ! what temples ! what august
Kings ! how unmoved is every countenance
Above the crowd ! And so it was in life.
No other city in the world, from west
To east, seems built for rich and poor alike.
In Athens, Antioch, Miletus, Rhodes,
The richest Roman could not shelter him
Against the dogstar ; here the poorest slave
Finds refuge under granite, here he sleeps
Noiseless, and, when he wakens, dips his hand
Into the treasured waters of the Nile.

Mecænas. I wish, Octavius, thou wouldst carry hence
For thy own worship one of those mild Gods,
Both arms upon the knees : 'tis time that all
Should imitate this posture.

Octavius. We will close
The gates of Janus.

Mecænas. Janus looks both ways ;
He may like best the breezy air abroad
And knock too hard against the bolted brass.

Octavius (to a Guard). Call Gallus hither.

Gallus. Cæsar ! what commands ?

Octavius. I would entrust a legion, more than one,
To our friend Gallus : I would fix him here
In Egypt : none is abler to coerce
The turbulent.

Gallus. Let others flap their limbs
With lotus-leaves when Sirius flames above.
Give me the banks of Anio, where young Spring,

Who knows not half the names of her own flowers,
Looks into Summer's eyes and wakes him up
Alert, and laughs at him until he lifts
His rod of roses and she runs away.

Octavius. And has that lovely queen no charms for thee ?

Gallus. If truth be spoken of her, and it may,
Since she is powerless and deserted now,
Tho' more than thrice seven * years have come and stolen
Day after day a leaf or two of bloom,
She has but changed her beauty ; the soft tears
Fall, one would think, to make it spring afresh.

Octavius. And not for Gallus ? Let one brave man more
Ascend the footstool of the regal bed.

Gallus. As the Gods will ! but may they not will *me* !

SCENE THE SIXTH.

ANTONY *and* DOLABELLA.

Antony. Welcome, my Dolabella ! There is none
From yonder camp I would embrace beside.
My little queen hath given at last an audience
To thy persuasive tongue ?

Dolabella. Most graciously.

Antony. I never thought she would permit Cæsarion
To leave her side ; hardly can I myself
Bear separation from that brave young boy ;
I love him as my own.

Dolabella. Your own thus stand
Safe from all peril.

Antony. Is not it disgrace ?
A boy save *me* ? for to save them is *me*.

Dolabella. Create a generosity of soul
In one whom conquest now hath made secure ;
Bid him put forth his power, it now is greater
Than any man's : consider what a friend
Cæsarion hath in Julius, all whose wounds
Will bleed afresh before the assembled tribes
On the imperial robe thy hands outsprad
With its wide rents for every God above
And every Roman upon earth to number.

* History and poetry do not always well agree. Julius Cæsar had left Egypt before the birth of Cæsarion, at which time Cleopatra was about fourteen. That she retained her freshness seven or eight years longer, may be attributed in part to the care she took of it, and in a greater to her pure Macedonian blood. Beside, Alexandria is not sultry ; and the architects of antiquity knew how to keep up an equable and healthy temperaturs.

Antony. Ah! those were days worth living o'er again.

Dolabella. Live them again then.

Antony. Never, stript of power,
Of dignity, of Rome's respect, of theirs
Who compass me, who fix before these eyes
The very eagles which adorn'd my tent.

Dolabella. Brave thoughts! but are none weaker intermixt?

Antony. Smile, Dolabella! Oh, could but that smile
Kill as it pierces me! But tread the ground
Softly and lightly where her feet have moved.
My Cleopatra! never will we part,
Thy son shall reign in Egypt.

Dolabella. Much I fear'd,
O Antony, thy rancour might prevail
Against thy prudence. Cæsar bears no rancour.

Antony. Too little is that heart for honest hatred.
The serpent the most venomous hath just
Enough of venom for one deadly wound,
He strikes but once, and then he glides away.

Dolabella. Octavius strikes not Antony.

Antony. One man
Alone dares strike the man whom thou hast named.
But let me hear, the phrase of fraudulence.

Dolabella. Cæsar's, I trust, will not deserve that name,
He says his reign shall be the reign of peace.

Antony. Peace! what is that? a pleasant room to sit
Or walk about in, nor could heart desire
A cooler place wherein to spread the cates:
First, bring these cates; bring liberty, the salt
That seasons with true relish all things else.

Dolabella. We sometimes leave but little, when we rise
From its enjoyment, for those servitors
Who toil'd for us throughout the heat of day:
Reckless we riot: never can spilt wine
Enter the golden cup it sparkled in:
Harpies above defile the half-eaten fruit.
Rome now would rest awhile.

Antony. Yea, long will be
Her rest: the scourge of Earth will be the scorn.

Dolabella. We must submit.

Antony. Thou must; thou hast submitted;
But never I; what I have been I am.

Dolabella. Less prosperous than once, thy fortunes may
Be yet restored.

Antony. I would not take them back,
By any man, least by that man, bestow'd;

I would not have my portion of the world,
 No, nor the whole of it, if that glib tongue
 Call'd every God to ratify the gift.
 Show me the foe he ever fairly met,
 The friend he hath embraced, and not betray'd,
 And tell me, Dolabella, for thou canst,
 Who murder'd Hirtius; by whose agency
 Poison was dropt into the wound of Pansa.

Dolabella. Of this ask Glyco, ask Aquilius Niger
 Of that.

Antony. Both know the secret, both have told it :
 And now will I tell thee one.

At the noon
 Of yesterday, when fruit is most refreshing,
 A countryman who brings the yellow figs
 His queen is fond of, brought a basketful,
 Saying to Iras :

“These my little daughter,
 Whom once you used to play with in the garden,
 Bids me to give into your hands; she thinks
 The queen requires some frolic; you alone
 Can venture so far with her. Place within
 The smooth cool linen of her bed this basket
 Of cane-leaves and of rushes intertwined,
 With all the fruit below, the leaves a-top;
 You see it is but shallow, scarce a palm,
 Mind it lie flat; yet she will find it out
 Tho' it be always dusky in that room.”

What is there in the tale that thou shouldst stare ?

Dolabella. Enough. An idle rumour reacht the camp
 That Cleopatra stung herself to death,
 Vexing two asps held close against her bosom.

Antony. Are Romans all so ignorant of the asp
 That two are wanted? that he must be vext?
 That, like domestic animals, he bites?
 He bites not, but he strikes with upper jaw
 As other vipers do, and the black lid
 Drops, and he crawls away; one pang, one shriek,
 Death hears it, nor delays: the hind knows that.
 An earlier story now. So exquisite
 In luxury, my queen dissolved a pearl
 Above all price, and drank it in her wine.
 Bid thou the tatter of the tale expound
 How that same acid which dissolved the pearl
 Darken'd no tooth, abbreviated no smile,
 But gave her spirits for the festive song.

Ah! had she done so, Medicine had run up
In vain to help her; Death had interposed.

Dolabella. Another tale, alike incredible.
'Tis said she shook from off her coronal
Poison into your cup, dashing it down
Just at the lip, and proving its effect
On household beast before you, thus to show
How easy were the deed to one who will'd.

Antony. Is such a fiction workt by homespun yarn?
I doubt it: surely some Greek needle wrought
The quaint device, for poet to adorn
By metaphor, and sage by apologue.
Thou hast among thy friends one capable,
In man's attire, fresh-blooming from Hymettus,
Handmaid of Cilnius the rich Aretine.
O Romans! are your ears to falsities
Wide open, and your mouths agape for them
As are the callow sparrows for their food,
Hour after hour? Ye little know that asps
Are not mere worms of one span-length, one cubit,
But longer than the vipers in your fields,
So hideous that no woman, young or old,
Or rustic, or well train'd to monkey-gods,
But must abhor them. Your credulity
Will urge the whisper in each other's ear
That she, the daintiest of all womankind,
Would handle them, now plague them, now caress
And hug them as she might a tender babe . . .
Yet even the serious may believe the tale,
For what in Rome is not believed . . . but truth?

Dolabella. To me the queen said nothing of this snare.

Antony. Nothing she knows of it.

I heard a scream . . .

From Iras, and rusht in. She threw herself
Before my feet, prayed me to strike her dead,
And ran toward the corner, where I saw
The beasts coil'd up, and cut them thro' and thro'.
Then told she all; but not until her prayer
For death was fruitless, not until I warn'd her
How life and death, while yet we live, are ours.

Dolabella. Might I advise . . .

Antony. Not me: I never took
Any advice, in battle or debate:

Dolabella. Cæsar hath urged thee sorely, and may worse;
What wouldst thou do with him were he the vanquisht?

Antony. Do with him? throw him to the fishermen

To bait their hooks with and catch crocodiles,
If crocodile feeds upon crocodile.
Take him these words : we keep no secrets here.

Dolabella. Cæsar is lenient.

Antony. Never let that word
Glide o'er thy lips, no word is it for me.
Tell him no friend of mine shall ask my life,
No enemy shall give it. I am lord
Of my own honour ; he has none to lose :
The money-changer's grandson calculates
But badly here. He waits for thee : depart.

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

ANTONY and AGRIPPA.

Antony. And so, the victor comes to taunt the vanquish't !
Is this well done, Agrippa ?

Agrippa. 'Twere ill done,
And never done by me.

There have been some
Who carried to the forum and there cast
The tags and rags of mimes, and tarnisht spangles
Bag'd from the dusthole corner ; gravity
Becomes me better and plain Roman garb
In action and in speech ; no taunt is mine.

Antony. What then demands the vanquisher ?

Agrippa. I come
To ask a favour, ask a gift, of thee.
Give me thy children.

Antony. To adopt ?

Agrippa. To save :
They may have enemies ; they shall have friends
If thou accedest to my last request :
Lose we no time ; we shall be soon at Rome.

Antony. Ventidius may prevent it.

Agrippa. He hath serv'd thee
Faithfully, and is steady to thy cause :
The sea is closed to him, the river closed,
Wide as the desert is, it is not open,
And half his army, more than half, is ours.

Antony. But many yet are left me, brave and true.

Agrippa. When Fortune hath deserted us, too late
Comes Valour, standing us in little stead.
They who would die for us are just the men
We should not push on death or throw away.

Antony. Too true ! Octavius with his golden wand
Hath reacht from far some who defied his sword.
How little fire within warps loosen'd staves
Together, for the hoop to hold them tight !
I have too long stood balancing the world
Not to know well its weight : of that frail crust
Friends are the lightest atoms.

Agrippa. Not so all.

Antony. I thought of Dolabella and the rest.
Ventidius and Agrippa, these are men
Romulus might have wrestled with nor thrown.
I have proved both.

Agrippa. One thou shalt prove again,
In guise more friendly than when last we met.

Antony. To me well spoken hast thou for Ventidius,
Speak for him in that manner to another,
Tell him that he has done against the Parthian
What Julius might, perhaps might not, have done.
Triumph must follow. I shall never see it,
Nor shall I see, nor shalt thou either, one
On which cold-eyes, dim even in youth to beauty,
Look forward.

Are there not kings left enow
To drag, by brace or leash, and back to back,
Along the *Sacred Way* ?

Vile wretch ! his steeds
Shall never at the cries of Cleopatra
Prance up against their trappings stiff with gold.

Agrippa. Sad were the sight.

Antony. Too far hath Dolabella
Prevail'd with her.

Agrippa. Hath Dolabella come
Within these walls ?

Antony. Hast thou not seen him then
Leave them within the hour ?

Agrippa. Indeed not I.
My station is the harbour where the ships
Are riding, his lies nearer to the town.
Thou musest, Antony !

Antony. And well may muse.
He was my friend . . . he. Away with doubt !

Agrippa. He was the friend of Tullius, friend of Brutus,
Friend too of Lepidus, akin to each,
And yet betray'd he them.

Give me the boys ;
With me they enter Rome.

Antony. Take, take them ; both ?
 Yes ; both are safer, both are happier so.
 I love them ; but I might have loved them more ;
 Now is too late.

Take them ; be kind to them . .
 Nay, look not back. Tears scorch the father's eyes,
 The Roman should extinguish them . . and shall.
 Farewell ! farewell !

But turn thy face aside . .
 No . . one word more.

Agrippa. Thy gladness gladdens me,
 Bursting so suddenly. What happy change !

Antony. Thou hast a little daughter, my old friend,
 And I two little sons . . I had at least . .
 Give her the better and the braver one,
 When by thy care he comes to riper age.

Agrippa. O Antony ! the changes of our earth
 Are suddener and oftener than the moon's,
 On hers we calculate, not so on ours,
 But leave them in the hands of wilful Gods,
 Inflexible, yet sometimes not malign.

Antony. They have done much for me, nor shall reproach
 Against them pass my lips : I might have askt,
 But never thought of asking, what desert
 Was mine for half the blessings they bestow'd.
 I will not question them why they have cast
 My greatness and my happiness so low ;
 They have not taken from me their best gift,
 A heart for ever open to my friends :
 It will be cold ere long, and one will grieve.

SCENE THE EIGHTH.

OCTAVIUS, AGRIPPA, CÆSARIUS, MÆCENAS.

Octavius. What said that obstinate and proud old thief ?
 Couldst thou not draw him from his den, Agrippa ?

Agrippa. I tried not.

Octavius. Nor perhaps desired.

Agrippa. 'Tis true,
 I entered not by stealth, and broke no confidence ;
 Tattius, who knew and once fought under me . . .

Octavius. And would not he who knows thy power, and who
 Admitted thee within the royal hold,
 Do more ?

Agrippa. Not even this would he have done

For any other, nor for me without
Permission from his general; this obtain'd,
I enter'd.

Octavius. His audacity, no doubt,
Abated with his fortunes, and he droopt
As droops a lotus when the water fails.

Agrippa. Neither in life nor death will that man droop;
He holds down Fortune, still too strong for her.

Octavius. We must then starve him out, or slay his sons,
Before his eyes.

Agrippa. Thus nothing will remain
For him to fear, and every honest sword
Will skulk within its scabbard for mere shame.
This may not be the worst . . . when brave men fall
By treachery, men like them avenge the blow;
Antoni^{us} did it . . . was Antoni^{us} blamed?

Octavius. But who will answer for our own dear lives
If these boys live?

Agrippa. I will . . . the boys are mine.

Octavius. Cæsarion is secure.

Agrippa. I do rejoice

At this.

Octavius. I wonder he hath not arrived.

Agrippa. Rescued from Egypt is the Roman lad?
I long to see him.

Octavius. Wait then, and thou shalt.

Agrippa. Women and eunuchs and Greek parasites
Educate ill those who may one day rule.

Octavius. True, very true . . . we will bear this in mind.

Agrippa. He must learn better soon.

Octavius. Be sure he shall.

Agrippa. What are those sistrums and those tamborines
That trifle with the trumpet and intrude?

Octavius. The very things thou wouldst provide against.

Heigh! who commanded such obstreperous shouts?

Agrippa. The man who gave us Egypt, sir, and thee.
The sound bursts louder from his hollow tomb:
Such are the honours which attend his child.

Octavius. Hark! the arms strike the ground!

Agrippa. Soldiers, well done!

Already do they know whom they salute.

Cæsarion. Hail! hail! my cousin!

Let me kiss that hand

So soft and white. Why hold it back from me?

I am your cousin, boy Cæsarion.

Octavius. Who taught you all this courtesy?

Cæsarion. My heart.
 Beside, my mother bade me wish you joy.
Octavius. I would myself receive it from her.
Cæsarion. Come,
 Come then with me ; none see her and are sad.
Octavius. Then she herself is not so ?
Cæsarion. Not a whit,
 Grave as she looks, but should be merrier still.
Octavius. See may expect all bounty at our hands.
Cæsarion. Bounty ! she wants no bounty.
 Look around ;
 Those palaces, those temples, and their gods
 And myriad priests within them, all are hers ;
 And people bring her ships, and gems, and gold.
 O cousin ! do you know what some men say,
 (If they do say it) that your sails ere long
 Will waft all these away ?
 I wish 'twere true
 What else they talk.
Octavius. What is it ?
Cæsarion. That you come
 To carry off her also.
 She is grown
 Paler, and I have seen her bite her lip
 At hearing this. Ha ! well I know my mother ;
 She thinks it may look redder for the bite.
 But will you really carry us to Rome
 In triumph ? thro' the streets, and up the hill,
 And over arches . . foolish folks say under . .
 With flowers all round them ? O ! what joy to see
 The people that once loved my father so !
Octavius. We will do all that may oblige the queen.
Cæsarion. And yet she shudders at the very thought
 Of those fresh honours which delight my heart.
Octavius. For her, or for yourself ?
Cæsarion. We boys, you know,
 Think of ourselves the first ; and yet, and yet,
 If my sweet mother is averse to change,
 And weary of it, I would pass my days
 With her ; yes, even in that lonely tower
 (Which to my eyes looks like a sepulchre)
 Whence she protests the Gods alone shall take her.
Octavius (to a Guard). See due attention paid this royal guest.
Cæsarion. Unwillingly I part from one so kind.
Octavius (to AGRIPPA). Agrippa, didst thou mark that comely
 boy ?

Agrippa. I did indeed.

Octavius. There is methinks in him
A somewhat not unlike our common friend.

Agrippa. Unlike? There never was such similar
Expression. I remember Caius Julius
In youth, altho' my elder by some years;
Well I remember that high-vaulted brow,
Those eyes of eagle under it, those lips
At which the senate and the people stood
Expectant for their portals to unclose;
Then speech, not womanly but manly sweet,
Came from them, and shed pleasure as the morn
Sheds light.

Octavius. The boy has too much confidence.

Agrippa. Not for his prototype. When he threw back
That hair in hue like cinnamon, I thought
I saw great Julius tossing his, and warn
The pirates he would give them their desert.

My boy, thou gazest at those arms hung round.

Cæsarion. I am not strong enough for sword and shield,
Nor even so old as my sweet mother was
When I first rioted upon her knee
And seiz'd whatever sparkled in her hair.
Ah! you had been delighted had you seen
The pranks she pardon'd me. What gentleness!
What playfulness!

Octavius. Go now, Cæsarion.

Cæsarion. And had you ever seen my father too!
He was as fond of her as she of me,
And often bent his thoughtful brow o'er mine
To kiss what she had kist, then held me out
To show how he could manage the refractory,
Then one long smile, one pressure to the breast.

Octavius. How tedious that boy grows!

Lead him away,

Aufidius!

There is mischief in his mind,
He looks so guileless.

Agrippa. He has lived apart
From evil counsellors, with grey-hair'd men
Averse to strife, and maidens of the queen.

Octavius. This makes me think . . .

We will another time

Consider what is best.

Here comes Mæcenas.

(*To MÆCENAS.*) Cilnius! you met upon the stairs that boy?

Mecenas. I did.

Octavius. What think you of him ?

Mecenas. At one glance

'Twere rashness to decide.

Octavius. Seems he not proud ?

Mecenas. He smiled, and past me by.

Octavius. What insolence ! quite insupportable !

Mecenas. Perhaps he knew me not ; and, if he knew me,
I have no claim on affability
From Cæsar's enemies.

Agrippa (to himself). By Jove ! the man
At first so calm begins at last to chafe.

O, the vain Tuscan of protuberant purse !

Octavius. What said Agrippa ?

Agrippa. That our friend here chafes,
Altho' the mildest of all mortal men.

Octavius. Excepting one ; one whom no wrongs can ruffle.

I must give orders for some small affairs,
And will rejoin you soon.

Agrippa. My gentle Cilnius !

Do save this lad ! Octavius is so calm,
I doubt he hath some evil in his breast
Against the only scion of the house,
The orphan child of Julius.

Mecenas. Think, Agrippa,
If there be safety where such scion is,
Safety for you and me.

Agrippa. The mother must
Adorn the triumph, but that boy would push
Rome, universal Rome, against the steeds
That should in ignominy bear along
The image of her Julius. Think ; when Antony
Show'd but his vesture, sprang there not tears, swords,
Curses ? and swept they not before them all
Who shared the parricide ? If such result
Sprang from torn garment, what must from the sight
Of that fresh image which calls back again
The latest of the Gods, and not the least,
Who nurtured every child within those walls,
And emptied into every mother's lap
Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Gaul,
And this inheritance of mighty kings.
No such disgrace must fall on Cæsar's son.
Spare but the boy, and we are friends for ever.

Mecenas. Friends are we, but Octavius is our master.

Agrippa. Let him brush kings away and blow off queens,

But there are some of us who never struck
At boys, nor trampled on a prostrate head ;
Some of us are there too who fain would see
Rome better than they left her, with high blood
Bounding along her veins ; enough hath flowed.

Mecænas. Here comes Octavius. We attend his will.

Octavius. Enough that I know yours, my truest friends !
I look into your hearts and find my own.
Thy wishes, O Agrippa, I divine.
Antony was thy comrade in the wars
Of Julius ; Fulvia was thy enemy
And mine : her children to the Infernal Gods
Devote I, but the born of Cleopatra
Thou shalt have saved : Cæsarion shall rest here.

SCENE THE NINTH.

DOLABELLA. CÆSARION. SCOPAS.

Dolabella. Where hast thou put Cæsarion ?

Scopas.

Nigh at hand.

Dolabella. What is he doing ?

Scopas.

Just what lads like most ;

Munching a water-melon.

There is good,
At least good-nature, in that simple soul.
While most were sleeping in the night of noon
I brought him hither. Thirsty were we both,
And wine I offer'd him : he pusht it by
And said, " I drink no wine ; bring water-melons."
I brought him one : he cut it fairly thro',
And gave me half before he toucht the other,
Saying, " but keep the seeds, the round and black,
That I may plant them, when we get to Rome,
With my own hands in garden all my own."

Dolabella. Poor innocent !

Scopas.

I could not help but smile.

Dolabella. For once I envy thee.

But call him in.

Scopas. Ho ! youngster ! here !

Cæsarion.

What means that loud rude speech ?

This man seems civiler ; I may converse
With him, but never more, thou churl, with thee.

Dolabella. I would, my fair young friend, his voice less rough,
But honest Romans are sometimes abrupt.
Scopas is sorry.

Cæsarion. Honest! sorry too!
I then was wrong, and am more vext than he.
Scopas. Boy! I could wish I never saw thy face
Nor heard thy tongue.

Cæsarion. What can he mean?

Dolabella He feels
The offence he gave.

Cæsarion. Good man, be comforted,
And let my hand atone for face and tongue.

Scopas (to DOLABELLA). That smile disarms me.

Dolabella. My sweet prince, observe
How he repents.

I have some words to speak
In private to him: but I first would hear
How fare your little brothers.

Cæsarion. They are gone,
Both gone: two maidens carried them away
Before a noble-looking man they call
Agrippa.

Dolabella. Gone? say you? and with Agrippa?
O that I could have seen them ere they went!

Cæsarion. No matter; I will tell you all about them,
It is not much, if you desire to know.

One can not talk, the other talks all day,
One smiles at me, the other pulls my hair,
But he smiles too, and then runs off as fleet
As my gazelle, yet easier to be caught.

You have heard all, and now will I return
And leave you, as you wish: I know my way.

Dolabella. The duty must be done; 'tis Cæsar's will.

Scopas. Then done it shall be.

Dolabella. Take this token: here;
Take this too; ninety golden of like weight
Lie in the leather.

Scopas. Thanks; the deed is done.

[*Alone.*] What do these letters, bright and sharp, denote?
Cæsar Dictator; and what else beneath?

Perpetuo.

Gods above! *Perpetuo* too!
Ashes may be perpetual: nothing more
Remains of our dictator. Take the urn,
Empty it, weigh its inwards: poise the two,
This inch-broad coin with it; and what I toss
On my forefinger is the solider.

I must go in.

Cæsarion. 'Tis very kind in you

To visit me again : you bear no malice.
I know at once who loves me.

Scopas. And do I?

Cæsarion. One moment yes, one moment no. My handsome
And gentle cousin does not love me quite ;
I wish he did, I want so to love *him*.
How cool and quiet is this small dim room !
It wants no cushion : I begin to think
The hard stone-seat refreshes more the limbs.
Will you not try ?

Scopas. Not yet ; but presently.

Cæsarion. My mother is not here ; you need not mind.
People must not sit down before a queen ;
But before boys, whatever boys they are,
Men may, and should.

Oh ! what can I have done ?
And did you strike me ? Would you strike again ?
What runs into my sandals from my breast ?
Oh ! it begins to pain me . . . sadly, sadly !

Scopas. By all the Gods and Goddesses above !
I have no strength to strike the boy again.

Cæsarion. O father ! father ! where is now that face
So gravely fond that bent o'er your Cæsarion ?
And, mother ! thou too gone ! In all this gloom
Where shall I find thee ? Scopas ! Scopas ! help !

Scopas. Away with me ! Where is the door ? Against it
Stands he ? or follows he ? Crazy ! I am crazy !
O had but he been furious ! had he struck me !
Struggled, or striven, or lookt despitely !
Anything, anything but call my name
So tenderly. O had that mild reproach
Of his been keener when his sense return'd,
Only to leave him ever-lastingly,
I might not have been, what I now am, frantic.
Upturn'd to me those wandering orbs, outspread
Those quivering arms, falling the last of him,
And striking once, and only once, the floor,
It shook my dagger to the very hilt,
And ran like lightning up into my brain.

SCENE THE TENTH.

EROS and ANTONY.

Antony. Eros ! I speak thee welcome.

Eros. Hail, our lord !

Antony. Thou hast been ever faithful to thy trust,

And spoken freely, but decorously,
 On what concern'd the household and the state.
 My glory is gone down, and life is cold
 Without it. I have known two honest men
 Among the senators and consulars . .

Eros. None among humbler ?

Antony. By the Powers above !
 I thought but of the powerful, men of birth.

Eros. All men are that. Some sink below their cradle,
 Others rise higher than parental roof,
 And want no sceptre to support their steps.

Antony. Such there may be whom we have all past by.

Eros. Men cast long shadows when their life declines,
 Which we cross over without noticing ;
 We met them in the street and gave not way,
 When they were gone we lifted up both hands,
 And said to neighbours *These were men indeed !*

Antony. Reflections such as thine had wearied me
 Erewhile, and from another even now ;
 But what is that thou bringest me wrapt up,
 Tardy in offering it as worth too little ?

Eros. I bring a ruby and a hollow ring
 Whereon it fitted.

Antony. Gods of Rome ! at last
 Ye make me grateful. Thanks, and thanks alone,
 Have I to give, and one small sacrifice ;
 I vow it you before this hour is past.
 My heart may beat against its bars awhile,
 But shall not leave me yet.

Go, Eros, go,
 I must lie down and rest, feeble and faint.
 But come back presently.

Eros (after some absence). How fares our lord ?

Antony. Recovered, sound again, more sound than ever.

Eros. And yet our lord looks more like other men.

Antony (smiling). We can not always swagger, always act
 A character the wise will never learn :
 When Night goes down, and the young Day resumes
 His pointed shafts, and chill air breathes around,
 Then we put on our own habiliments
 And leave the dusty stage we proudly trod.
 I have been sitting longer at life's feast
 Than does me good ; I will arise and go.
 Philosophy would flatten her thin palm
 Outspread upon my sleeve ; away with her !
 Cuff off, cuff out, that chattering toothless jade !

The brain she puzzles, and she blunts the sword :
 Even she knows better words than that word *live*.
 Cold Cato, colder Brutus, guide not me ;
 No, nor brave Cassius.

Thou hast brought me balm.

Eros. Our lord may have some message for the giver,
 Which will console her.

Antony. She expected none :
 I did ; and it is come.

Say, lookt she pale ?

Spake she no word ?

Eros. Alas, most noble sir,
 She would not see me. Charmian said her face
 Was indeed pale, yet grew less pale than usual
 After she gave the ring, and then she spake
 Amid some sighs (some spasms too interposed)
 More cheerfully, and said she fain would sleep.

Antony. The fondest heart, the truest, beats no more.
 She listened to me, she hath answered me,
 She wanted no entreaty, she obeyed,
 She now commands : but no command want I.
 Queen of my soul ! I follow in thy train,
 Thine is the triumph.

Eros, up ! rejoice !

Tears, man ! do tears become us at this hour ?
 I never had too many ; thou hast seen
 (If thou didst see) the last of them.

My sword !

I will march out becomingly.

Eros. O sir !

Enemies watch all round, and famine waits
 Within.

Antony. Thou knowest not the prudent sons
 Of Egypt ; corn and wine have been supplied
 Enough for many years, piled underground.
 Tho' stiffened by the sludge of barbarism,
 Or indolent and overgorged at home,
 Briton or German would take heed that none
 Who fought for him should perish for the lack
 Of sustenance : the timid bird herself
 Will hover round and round until she bring
 The grain cried out for in the helpless nest.
 Give me my sword ! Is the point sharp ?

Eros. In vain

To trust it now !

Antony. Come, bring it ; let me try it.

Eros. O heavens and earth! Help! help! no help is nigh,
 No duty left but one: less worthily
 Than willingly this duty I perform. [Stabs himself.
 It pains not: for that blood I see no more.

SCENE THE ELEVENTH.

OFFICER. OCTAVIUS. MECÆNAS. GALLUS.

Officer. News! glorious news! news certain! Dead as Death!*Octavius.* Who dead?

Officer. The master of the horse to Julius,
 Master too, but this morning, of this realm,
 The great . . .

Mecænas. Halt there! and know, where Cæsar is
 There is none great but Cæsar!

Officer. Pardon! true!*Octavius.* And nought about his paramour?*Officer.* The queen?*Octavius.* Yes, fellow, yes.

Officer. Surely our emperor knows
 Of her; the story now is some days old.
 The queen was poisoned by two little worms
 Which people here call asps, most venomous things,
 Coil'd in a yellow fig around the seeds.
 Her maidens wail'd her loudly; men and maidens
 Alike mourn'd over . . . I had nearly slept.

Octavius. Many have done the same.

Art thou a Roman?

Officer. I have the honour, sir, to be a Gaul,
 A native of Massilia, that famed city
 Inhabited by heroes, built by Gods,
 Who entered it again with Caius Julius.

Mecænas. And didst thou see them enter?

Officer. Not distinctly,
 There were a few between: one told it me
 Who saw them; which, ye know, is just the same.

Octavius. Retire, my brave! go sure of a reward.
 Lucretia hath escaped us after all!
 But there is wax in Egypt, there are Greeks
 Who model it, and who can bear to look
 On queen or asp; this model'd to the life,
 The other more like what they work upon.
 No trouble in thus carrying her to Rome.
 Gallus! thou lookest grave: thou art the man

Exactly to compose an epitaph.
 No matter which died first : I think the asps
 Rather have had the start : I may be wrong,
 A bad chronologist, a worse astrologer.

Mecænas. Where Cæsar smiles, all others smile but Gallus.

Gallus. Not even Cæsar's smiles awaken mine
 When every enemy has dropt away,
 And he who made so many safe, is safe.

Mecænas. I wish thou wert more joyous.

Gallus. Kind the wish,

Almost enough to make me so.

Mecænas. Come ! come !

I know you poets : any wager now
 Thou hast already forced the weeping Muse
 To thy embraces. Tell us honestly ;
 Hast thou not turn'd the egg upon the nest
 Ready for hatching ?

Octavius. Guilty ; look at him,
 He blushes, blushes from cheekbone to beard.
 Now, Gallus, for the epitaph.

Mecænas. Recite it.

Gallus. Epitaphs are but cold and chisel'd words,
 Or mostly false if warmer : quite unfit
 Are mine for marble or for memory.
 I thought of her . . another would have said
 He wept : I wept not, but I know I sigh'd.

Mecænas. And wrote ? For poet is half sigh half flame :
 Sigh out thy sigh.

Gallus. Would Cæsar hear it ?

Octavius. Yea.

Gallus. I have not ventured to pronounce the name
 Of her I meditated on.

Cæsar. My friend

Is here judicious as in all things else.

Gallus. "Thou hast been floating on the o'erswollen stream
 Of life these many summers ; is thy last
 Now over ? hast thou dreamt out every dream ?
 Hath horn funereal blown the pageant past ?

Cæsar ! thou too must follow : all the rods
 Of sternest lictor cannot scare off Death ;
 She claims the earth for heritage ; our Gods
 Themselves have seen their children yield their breath."

Cæsar. Gallus ! I always thought thee a brave soldier,
 Never a first-rate poet : I am right.

Gallus. Cæsar ! I never heard of one who gain'd
 A battle and a kingdom who was not.

Cæsar. If there be anything on earth I know
Better than other things, 'tis poetry.

Mecænas. My sweet Octavius! draw not under nose
The knuckle of forefinger. Gallus aim'd
A harmless arrow: Love in sport hath done it
Often and often.

Gallus, seize his hand.
Now sing a pæan; sing a prophet's; sing
Egypt! thy pyramid of power is closed.

Gallus. I would; but want the breath: I have but strength
For elegy: here is the last of mine.

"The mighty of the earth are earth,
A passing gleam the brightest smile,
In golden beds have sorrows birth,
Alas! these live the longer while."

Octavius. Unless we haste to supper, we shall soon
Forfeit our appetites. Come, my two friends!

SCENE THE TWELFTH.

OCTAVIUS *and* OCTAVIA.

Octavius. Embrace me, sister; we have won; thy wrongs
Are now avenged.

Octavia. Speak not of wrong, but right,
And bring Rome peace and happiness once more.
'Tis kind in thee (but thou wert always kind)
To come so soon to greet me, while the altar
Is warm and damp with incense for thy safety.

Octavius. Octavia! I have brought thee from the Nile
Two pretty little serpents.

Octavia. Of all beasts
The serpent is the beast I most abhor.
Take them away.

Octavius. I have not brought them here,
Be not afraid; beside, they are so young
They can not bite.

Octavia. But send them off.

Octavius. I will.
What thinkest thou are these two reptiles call'd?

Octavia. I know not, nor can guess.

Octavius. *Lucius and Marcus,*
The brood of Antony.

O Heaven! she faints!
Rise, sister! let me help thee up; be sure
They shall not hurt thee. Grasp not thus my wrist,

And shoot not up those leaden bolts at me,
For such are thy stiff eyes. I said, and swear,
The little monsters never shall hurt *thee*.
I do not like those tears; but better they
Than the cold flint they fall from, and now melt.

Octavia. Brother, I know thy purpose. On my knees . . .

Octavius. Arise! There wants not this to seal their doom.

Octavia. This is my fault, not theirs, if fault there be.

Octavius. I want, and I will have, security.

Octavia. What is there now on earth to apprehend?

Octavius. I dread lest he who guards them should adopt.

Octavia. Let him! O let him! if an honest man.

Frown not, debate not, struggle not against
Thy better Genius; argue with him thus,

“*Octavius! has there not been blood enough
Without the blood of children?*”

Octavius. Is my safety
Not dear to thee?

Octavia. Thy glory, thy content,
Are . . . no, not dearer, but almost as dear.
Hast thou not suffer'd pangs at every head
That fell?

Octavius. They fell that mine might not.

Octavia. But children
Strike not so high.

Octavius. Are children always children?

Octavia. O brother! brother! are men always men?

They are full-grown then only when grown up
Above their fears. Power never yet stood safe;
Compass it round with friends and kindnesses,
And not with moats of blood. Remember Thebes:
The towers of Cadmus toppled, split asunder,
Crasht: in the shadow of her oleanders
The pure and placid Dirce still flows by.
What shatter'd to its base but cruelty,
(Mother of crimes, all lesser than herself)
The house of Agamemnon king of kings?

Octavius. Thou art not yet, Octavia, an old woman;
Tell not, I do beseech thee, such old tales.

Octavia. Hear later; hear what our own parents saw.
Where lies the seed of Sulla? Could the walls
Of his Præneste shelter the young Marius,
Or subterranean passages provide
Escape? he stumbled through the gore his father
Had left in swamps on our Italian plains.
We have been taught these histories together,

Neither untrue nor profitless ; few years
Have since gone by, can memory too have gone ?
Ay, smile, Octavius ! only let the smile
Be somewhat less disdainful.

Octavius. 'Tis unwise
To plant thy foot where Fortune's wheel runs on.

Octavia. I lack not wisdom utterly ; my soul
Assures me wisdom is humanity,
And they who want it, wise as they may seem,
And confident in their own sight and strength,
Reach not the scope they aim at.

Worst of war
Is war of passion ; best of peace is peace
Of mind, reposing on the watchful care
Daily and nightly of the household Gods.

DEATH OF BLAKE.

Blake. The pillow is too soft ; my head sinks in ;
Raise me up higher : that will do, my men !
But where is England ? Are they cliffs or clouds
That rise before me.

Captain. There are both, sir, both
Ahead of us. But you without your glass
See better than the rest of us.

Blake. How so ?
I could not read my Bible in the sun,
Nor see the porpoises that played below
But yesterday. My sight grows worse and worse . . .
My hearing too . . . I catch your words by halves . . .
I cannot hear the water. Do we move ?

Captain. Ay, sir, and homeward.

Blake. My home lies, methinks,
Nearer than thine.

Captain (aside). God help him ! he forgets
That we are neighbours in our pleasant vale,
That he has caught me up and twicht my chin
When I would run into the house for shame.

Blake. Look out, men ! Level with the shrouds, nay, lower,
The mists loom over-head ; the cliffs are close ;
Beware ; mind each his business ; leave me here,
And say no more ; for I am faint . . . at heart
Not very . . . yet there too.

O restless soul,
So soon to leave me with my God alone,
Why sickenest thou ? He will support my steps
To His own house and rest me with His own.

Captain. General ! He hears you ; He hath heard our prayer.

Blake. I thought . . . but I was wrong . . . that my command
Was *Let all leave me.* Once none disobeyed ;
Now, alas ! now . . . O Robert Blake ! thy voice
Is weak indeed ; it was not so, time past.

Captain. Sir! the most duteous is the only one
Who here hath disobeyed. Forgive this fault,
The first in Edward Hardy you have blamed.

Blake. I dare not blame it. How much greater faults
Have I committed when thy years were mine!
Yet they were all forgiven, else the Lord
Would not have rais'd me from my low estate
To gain His battles, with true men like thee.
Ah surely I am haler than I was,
And much of fever hath abated in me,
For I feel moisture on my hand and cheek.
What! groanest thou at this? Wouldst wish me dead
Because in battle 'twas not mine to die?

Captain. O sir! my tears have wetted you! they may
Do mischief!

Blake. There are tears that brave men shed
And brave men only; thine have done me good;
Squander no more of them; reserve the rest
For better . . . *men* I would have said, but *men*
Is not the word . . . For woman . . . spouse and widow.
Where are we now?

Captain. The Lizard is in sight.

Blake. Happy, O England! he who meets thee safe,
Mistress of nations, mistress of thyself . . .
Be this thy glory!

Captain. No small part is yours,
My general!

Blake. Hush, thou babbler! without more
As bold, as self-devoted . . . Am I proud?
I, who should now grow humbler . . . without those
Nothing were done for England's Commonwealth:
Long, long as ye deserve it, may it last!
Edward! I think no better word, if any,
Will follow. Lower my head. Thanks; thanks; good-bye.

Thus sank the wisest of the godly-brave,
And England's own high heart sank too . . . how deep!
She saw his bones, yet moist with their own clay,
Amid the giggles of the foully fair
And smirks of prelates in like lawn arraid,
A drunken king dig from the grave and spurn.

Britain! take up thy spear; the morn is fresh;
A brood of the same beasts is prowling round
In packs; prick onward; let not one escape,
Growler or whiner: thou hast limbs as strong
As those who fought with Blake and died for thee.

HELLENICS,
COMPRISING
HEROIC IDYLS, ETC.

COME back, ye wandering Muses, come back home,
Ye seem to have forgotten where it lies :
Come, let us walk upon the silent sands
Of Simois, where deep foot-marks show long strides ;
Thence we may mount, perhaps, to higher ground,
Where Aphrodité from Athenè won
The golden apple, and from Herè too,
And happy Ares shouted far below.

Or would ye rather choose the grassy vale
Where flows Anapos thro' anemones,
Hyacinths, and narcissuses, that bend
To show their rival beauty in the stream ?

Bring with you each her lyre, and each in turn
Temper a graver with a lighter song.

HELLENICS,
COMPRISING
HEROIC IDYLS, ETC.

PREFIXING a preface is like keeping an invited friend at the hall door, instead of conducting him at once into the house. Little in these pages will gratify the generality of readers. Poetry, in our day, is oftener prismatic than diaphanous: this is not so: they who look into it may see through. If there be anywhere a few small air-bubbles, it yet leaves to the clear vision a wide expanse of varied scenery.

THRASYMEDES AND EUNŌE.

Who will away to Athens with me? who
Loves choral songs and maidens crown'd with flowers,
Unenvious? mount the pinnace; hoist the sail.
I promise ye, as many as are here,
Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me, taste
From unrinsed barrel the diluted wine
Of a low vineyard or a plant ill-pruned,
But such as anciently the Ægean isles
Pour'd in libation at their solemn feasts:
And the same goblets shall ye grasp, embost
With no vile figures of loose languid boors,
But such as Gods have lived with and have led.

The sea smiles bright before us. What white sail
Plays yonder? what pursues it? Like two hawks
Away they fly. Let us away in time
To overtake them. Are they menaces
We hear? And shall the strong repulse the weak,
Enraged at her defender? Hippias!
Art thou the man? 'Twas Hippias. He had found
His sister borne from the Cecropian port

By Thrasymedes. And reluctantly ?
 Ask, ask the maiden ; I have no reply.
 " Brother ! O brother Hippias ! O, if love,
 If pity, ever toucht thy breast, forbear !
 Strike not the brave, the gentle, the beloved,
 My Thrasymedes, with his cloak alone
 Protecting his own head and mine from harm."
 " Didst thou not once before," cried Hippias,
 Regardless of his sister, hoarse with wrath
 At Thrasymedes, " didst not thou, dog-eyed,
 Dare, as she walkt up to the Parthenon,
 On the most holy of all holy days,
 In sight of all the city, dare to kiss
 Her maiden cheek ?"

" Ay, before all the Gods,
 Ay, before Pallas, before Artemis,
 Ay, before Aphrodite, before Heré,
 I dared ; and dare again. Arise, my spouse !
 Arise ! and let my lips quaff purity
 From thy fair open brow."

The sword was up,
 And yet he kist her twice. Some God withheld
 The arm of Hippias ; his proud blood seeth'd slower
 And smote his breast less angrily ; he laid
 His hand on the white shoulder, and spake thus :
 " Ye must return with me. A second time
 Offended, will our sire Pisistratos
 Pardon the affront ? Thou shouldst have askt thyself
 This question ere the sail first flappt the mast."
 " Already thou hast taken life from me ;
 Put up thy sword," said the sad youth, his eyes
 Sparkling ; but whether love or rage or grief
 They sparkled with, the Gods alone could see.
 Piræeus they re-entered, and their ship
 Drove up the little waves against the quay,
 Whence was thrown out a rope from one above,
 And Hippias caught it. From the virgin's waist
 Her lover dropt his arm, and blusht to think
 He had retain'd it there in sight of rude
 Irreverent men : he led her forth, nor spake.
 Hippias walkt silent too, until they reacht
 The mansion of Pisistratos her sire.
 Serenely in his sternness did the prince
 Look on them both awhile : they saw not him,
 For both had cast their eyes upon the ground.
 " Are these the pirates thou hast taken, son ?"

Said he. "Worse, father! worse than pirates they,
Who thus abuse thy patience, thus abuse
Thy pardon, thus abuse the holy rites
Twice over."

"Well hast thou performed thy duty,"
Firmly and gravely said Pisistratos.
"Nothing then, rash young man! could turn thy heart
From Eunöe, my daughter?"

"Nothing, sir,
Shall ever turn it. I can die but once
And love but once. O Eunöe! farewell!"
"Nay, she shall see what thou canst bear for her."
"O father! shut me in my chamber, shut me
In my poor mother's tomb, dead or alive,
But never let me see what he can bear;
I know how much that is, when borne for me."
"Not yet: come on. And lag not thou behind,
Pirate of virgin and of princely hearts!
Before the people and before the Goddess
Thou hadst evinced the madness of thy passion,
And now wouldst bear from home and plenteousness
To poverty and exile this my child."
Then shuddered Thrasymedes, and exclaim'd,
"I see my crime; I saw it not before.
The daughter of Pisistratos was born
Neither for exile nor for poverty,
Ah! nor for me!" He would have wept, but one
Might see him, and weep worse. The prince unmoved
Strode on, and said, "To-morrow shall the people,
All who beheld thy trespasses, behold
The justice of Pisistratos, the love
He bears his daughter, and the reverence
In which he holds the highest law of God."
He spake; and on the morrow they were one.

THERON AND ZOE.

Zoe. Changed? very true, O Theron, I am changed.

Theron. It would at least have been as merciful
To hold a moment back from me the briar
You let recoil thus sharply on my breast.
Not long ago, not very long, you own'd

With maiden blushes, which became your brow
 Better than corn-flower, or that periwinkle
 Trained round it by a very careful hand,
 A long while trimming it (no doubt) and proud
 Of making its blue blossom laugh at me.

Zoe. I could laugh too. What did I own? It seems
 (It was so little) you have quite forgot.

Theron. That, since we sate together day by day,
 And walkt together, sang together, none
 Of earliest, gentlest, fondest, maiden friends
 Loved you as formerly. If one remain'd
 Dearer to you than any of the rest,
 You could not wish her greater happiness . . .

Zoe. Than what?

Theron. I think you never could have said it . . .
 I must have dreamt it . . .

Zoe. Tell me then your dream.

Theron. I thought you said . . . nay, I will swear you said . . .
 More than one heard it . . . that you could not wish
 The nearest to your heart more perfect joy
 Than Theron's love.

Zoe. Did I?

Theron. The Gods in heaven
 Are witnesses, no less than woodland Gods,
 That you did say it. O how changed! no word,
 No look, for Theron now!

Zoe. Girls often say
 More than they mean: men always do.

Theron. By Pan!
 Who punishes with restless nights the false,
 Hurling the sleeper down the precipice
 Into the roaring gulph, or letting loose
 Hounds, wolves, and tigers after him, his legs
 Meanwhile tied not quite close, but just apart,
 In withy bands . . . by him I swear, my tongue,
Zoe! can never utter half my love.
 Retract not one fond word.

Zoe. I must retract

The whole of those.

Theron. And leave me most unblest!

Zoe. I know not.

Theron. Heed not, rather say. Farewell.

Zoe. Farewell. I will not call you back again.
 Go, Theron! hatred soon will sear your wound.

Theron. Falsehood I hate: I can not hate the false.

Zoe. Never? Then scorn her.

Theron. I can scorn myself,
And will ; for others are preferr'd to me ;
The untried to the tried.

Zoe. You said farewell.

Theron. Again I say it.

Zoe. Now I can believe
That you, repeating it, indeed are gone.
Yet seem you standing where you stood before.
Hath Pan done this ? Pan, who doth such strange things.

Theron. Laugh me to scorn : derision I deserve :
But let that smile . . . O let it be less sweet !
Sorrowful let me part, but not insane.

Zoe. I know some words that charm insanity
Before it can take hold.

Theron. Speak them ; for now
Are they most wanted.

Zoe. I did say, 'tis true,
If on this solid earth friend dear enough
Remain'd to me, that Theron is the youth
I would desire to bless her.

Theron. To avoid
My importunity ; to hear no more
The broken words that spoilt our mutual song,
The sobs that choakt my flute, the humidity
(Not from the lip) that gurgled on the stops.

Zoe. I would avoid them all ; they troubled me.

Theron. Now then, farewell.

Zoe. I will do all the harm
I can to any girl who hopes to love you ;
Nor shall you have her.

Theron. Vain and idle threat !

Zoe. So, Theron ! you would love then once again ?

Theron. Never ; were love as possible and easy . . .

Zoe. As what ?

Theron. As death.

Zoe. O Theron ! once indeed
I said the words which then so flatter'd you,
And now so pain you. Long before my friends
Left me through envy of your fondness for me,
No, not the dearest of them could I bear
To see beloved by you. False words I spake,
Not knowing then how false they were.

Theron. Speak now
One that shall drown them all.

Zoe. My voice is gone.
Why did you kiss me . . . if you wisht to hear it ?

ÆSCHYLOS AND SOPHOCLES.

Sophocles. Thou goest then, and leavest none behind
Worthy to rival thee!

Æschylos. Nay, say not so.
Whose is the hand that now is pressing mine?
A hand I may not ever press again!
What glorious forms hath it brought boldly forth
From Pluto's realm! The blind old Œdipos
Was led on one side by Antigone,
Sophocles propt the other.

Sophocles. Sophocles
Sooth'd not Prometheus chain'd upon his rock,
Keeping the vultures and the Gods away;
Sophocles is not greater than the chief
Who conquered Ilion, nor could he revenge
His murder, or stamp everlasting brand
Upon the brow of that adulterous wife.

Æschylos. Live, and do more.

Thine is the Lemnian isle,
And thou hast placed the arrows in the hand
Of Philoctetes, hast assuaged his wounds
And given his aid without which Greece had fail'd.

Sophocles. I did indeed drive off the pest of flies;
We also have our pest of them which buz
About our honey, darken it, and sting;
We laugh at them, for under hands like ours,
Without the wing that Philoctetes shook,
One single feather crushes the whole swarm.

I must be grave.

Hath Sicily such charms
Above our Athens? Many charms hath she,
But she hath kings. Accursed be the race!

Æschylos. But where kings honour better men than they
Let kings be honoured too.

The laurel crown
Surmounts the golden; wear it, and farewell.

DAMÆTAS AND IDA.

DAMÆTAS is a boy as rude
 As ever broke maid's solitude.
 He watcht the little Ida going
 Where the wood-raspberries were growing,
 And, under a pretence of fear
 Lest they might scratch her arms, drew near,
 And, plucking up a stiff grey bent,
 The fruit (scarce touching it) he sent
 Into both hands : the form they took
 Of a boat's keel upon a brook ;
 So not a raspberry fell down
 To splash her foot or stain her gown.
 When it was over, for his pains
 She let his lips do off the stains
 That were upon two fingers ; he
 At first kist two, and then kist three,
 And, to be certain every stain
 Had vanisht, kist them o'er again.
 At last the boy, quite shameless, said
 " See ! I have taken out the red !
 Now where there's redder richer fruit
 Pray, my sweet Ida, let me do 't."
 " Audacious creature ! " she cried out,
 " What in the world are you about ? "
 He had not taken off the red
 All over ; on both cheeks 'twas spread ;
 And the two lips that should be white
 With fear, if not with fear, with spite
 At such ill usage, never show'd
 More comely, or more deeply glow'd.
 Damætás fancied he could move
 The girl to listen to his love :
 Not he indeed.

Damætás. For pity's sake !

Ida. Go ; never more come nigh this brake.

Damætás. Must I, why must I, press in vain ?

Ida. Because I hate you.

Damætás. Think again,

Think better of it, cruel maid !

Ida. Well then . . because I am afraid.

Damætás. Look round us : nobody is near.

Ida. All the more reason for my fear.

Damætás. Hatred is overcome by you,
 And Fear can be no match for two.

HYPERBION.

HYPERBION was among the chosen few
 Of Phœbus; and men honoured him awhile,
 Honouring in him the God. But others sang
 As loudly; and the boys as loudly cheer'd.
 Hyperbion (more than bard should be) was wroth,
 And thus he spake to Phœbus: "Hearst thou,
 O Phœbus! the rude rabble from the field,
 Who swear that they have known thee ever since
 Thou feddest for Admetos his white bull?"
 "I hear them," said the God. "Seize thou the first
 And haul him up above the heads of men,
 And thou shalt hear them shout for thee as pleas'd."
 Headstrong and proud Hyperbion was: the crown
 Of laurel on it badly cool'd his brow:
 So, when he heard them singing at his gate,
 While some with flints cut there the rival's name,
 Rushing he seiz'd the songster at their head:
 The songster kickt and struggled hard; in vain.
 Hyperbion claspt him round with arm robust,
 And with the left a hempen rope uncoil'd,
 Whereon already was a noose: it held
 The calf until the mother's teat was drawn
 At morn and eve; and both were now afield.
 With all his strength he pull'd the wretch along,
 And haul'd him up a pine-tree where he died.
 But one night, not long after, in his sleep
 He saw the songster: then did he beseech
 Apollo to enlighten him, if perchance
 In what he did he had done aught amiss.
 "Thou hast done well, Hyperbion!" said the God,
 "As I did also to one Marsyas
 Some years ere thou wert born: but better 'twere
 If thou hadst understood my words aright,
 For those around may harm thee, and assign
 As reason that thou wentest past the law.
 My meaning was that thou shouldst hold him up
 In the high places of thy mind, and show
 Thyself the greater by enduring him."
 Downcast Hyperbion stood: but Phœbus said
 "Be of good cheer, Hyperbion! if the rope
 Is not so frayed but it may hold thy calf,
 The greatest harm is that by hauling him
 Thou hast chafed, sorely, sorely, that old pine;
 And pine-tree bark will never close again."³

ALCIPHRON AND LEUCIPPE.

AN ancient cheenut's blossoms threw
 Their heavy odour over two :
 Leucippe, it is said, was one,
 The other then was Alciphron.

"Come, come ! why should we stand beneath
 This hollow tree's unwholesome breath,"
 Said Alciphron, "here's not a blade
 Of grass or moss, and scanty shade.
 Come ; it is just the hour to rove
 In the lone dingle shepherds love,
 There, straight and tall, the hazel twig
 Divides the crooked rock-held fig,
 O'er the blue pebbles where the rill
 In winter runs, and may run still.
 Come then, while fresh and calm the air,
 And while the shepherds are not there."

Leucippe. But I would rather go when they
 Sit round about and sing and play.
 Then why so hurry me ? for you
 Like play and song and shepherds too.

Alciphron. I like the shepherds very well,
 And song and play, as you can tell.
 But there is play I sadly fear,
 And song I would not have you hear.

Leucippe. What can it be ? what can it be ?

Alciphron. To you may none of them repeat
 The play that you have played with me,
 The song that made your bosom beat.

Leucippe. Don't keep your arm about my waist.

Alciphron. Might not you stumble ?

Leucippe. Well then, do.

But why are we in all this haste ?

Alciphron. To sing.

Leucippe. Alas ! and not play too ?

MELITON AND LILY.

THERE was a time when Flowers could speak more plain
 Than Poets now do ; and for once again
 A Flower shall answer what a Poet said . . .
 Meliton *he* was, Lily was the maid.

Sit on this garden-bench and hear a song,
 Maybe not tiresome, certainly not long.

Meliton. Lily! why dost thou shower on me the gold
 Off thy white bosom, dazzling to behold?
 Must I confess to thee, another Flower
 I love still better at this very hour,
 And she shall (if not over) place thee nigh
 A bosom pure as thine, where never sigh
 (I hope) shall shake thee, Lily! now goodbye,
 Forgetting not, nor ready to disown
 Thy friend of other days, thy Meliton.
 Before thee, at an early season, burst
 A Rose, and whispered low . . . *You loved me first.*

Lily. You are inconstant, now I know,
 I often heard it long ago
 But never thought to tell you so.
 I need no blush; but every day
 She blushes; yes, and well she may.
 Pure let her be! well! who should care?
 Is she, pray tell me, quite as fair?
 You do not answer what I ask.

Meliton. I dare not; it's too hard a task.

ICARIOS AND ERIGONÈ.

IMPROVIDENT were once the Attic youths,
 As (if we may believe the credulous
 And testy) various youths have been elsewhere.
 But truly such was their improvidence,
 Ere Pallas in compassion was their guide,
 They never stowed away the fruits of earth
 For winter use; nor knew they how to press
 Olive or grape: yet hospitality
 Sate at the hearth, and there was mirth and song.
 Wealthy and generous in the Attic land,
 Icaros! wert thou; and Erigonè,
 Thy daughter, gave with hearty glee the milk,
 Buzzing in froth beneath unsteady goat,
 To many who stopt near her; some for thirst,
 And some to see upon its back that hand
 So white and small and taper, and await
 Until she should arise and show her face.
 The father wisht her not to leave his house,

Nor she to leave her father; yet there sued
 From all the country round both brave and rich;
 Some, nor the wealthier of her wooers, drove
 Full fifty slant-brow'd kingly-hearted swine,
 Reluctant ever to be led aright,
 Race autocratical, autochthon race,
 Lords of the woods, fed by the tree of Jove.
 Some had three ploughs; some had eight oxen; some
 Had vines, on oak, on maple, and on elm,
 In long and strait and gleamy avenues,
 Which would have tired you had you reacht the end
 Without the unshapen steps that led beyond
 Up the steep hill to where they lean'd on poles.
 Yet kind the father was, and kind the maid.
 And now when winter blew the chaff about,
 And hens pursued the grain into the house,
 Quarrelsome and indignant at repulse,
 And rushing back again with ruffled neck,
 They and their brood; and kids blinkt at the brand,
 And bee-nosed oxen, with damp nostrils lowered
 Against the threshold, stamp't the dogs away;
 Icarios, viewing these with thoughtful mind,
 Said to Erigonè, "Not scantily
 The Gods have given us these birds, and these
 Short-bleating kids, and these loose-hided steers.
 The Gods have given: to them will we devote
 A portion of their benefits, and bid
 The youths who love and honour us partake:
 So shall their hearts, and so shall ours, rejoice."
 The youths were bidden to the feast: the flesh
 Of kid and crested bird was plentiful:
 The steam hung on the rafters, where were nail'd
 Bushes of savory herbs, and figs and dates;
 And yellow-pointed pears sent down long stalks
 Through nets wide-mesht, work of Erigonè
 When night was long and lamp yet unsupplied.
 Choice grapes Icarios had; and these, alone
 Of all men in the country, he preserved
 For festive days; nor better day than this
 To bring them from beneath his reed-thatcht roof.
 He mounted the twelve stairs with hearty pride,
 And soon was heard he, breathing hard: he now
 Descended, holding in both arms a cask,
 Fictile, capacious, bulging: cork-tree bark
 Secured the treasure; wax above the mouth,
 And pitch above the wax. The pitch he brake,

The wax he scraped away, and laid them by,
 Wrenching up carefully the cork-tree bark.
 A hum was heard. "What! are there bees within?"
 Euphorbas cried. "They came then with the grapes,"
 Replied the elder, and pour'd out clear juice
 Fragrant as flowers, and wrinkled husks anon.
 "The ghosts of grapes?" cried Phanor, fond of jokes
 Within the house, but ever abstinent
 Of such as that in woodland and alone,
 Where any sylvan God might overhear.
 No few were saddened at the ill-omen'd word,
 But sniffing the sweet odour, bent their heads,
 Tasted, sipt, drank, ingurgitated: fear
 Flew from them all, joy rusht to every breast,
 Friendship grew warmer, hands were join'd, vows sworn.
 From cups of every size, from cups two-ear'd,
 From ivy-twisted and from smooth alike,
 They dash the water; they pour in the wine;
 (For wine it was) untill that hour unseen.
 They emptied the whole cask; and they alone;
 For both the father and the daughter sate
 Enjoying their delight. But when they saw
 Flusht faces, and when angry words arose
 As one more fondly glanced against the cheek
 Of the fair maiden on her seat apart,
 And she lookt down, or lookt another way
 Where other eyes caught hers and did the like,
 Sadly the sire, the daughter fearfully,
 Upon each other fixt wide-open eyes.
 This did the men remark, and, bearing signs
 Different, as were their tempers, of the wine,
 But feeling each the floor reel under him,
 Each raging with more thirst at every draught,
 Acastor first (sidelong his step) arose,
 Then Phanor, then Antyllos:
 "Zeus above
 Confound thee, cursed wretch!" aloud they cried,
 "Is this thy hospitality? must all
 Who loved thy daughter perish at a blow?
 Not at a blow, but like the flies and wasps."
 Madness had seiz'd them all. Erigonè
 Ran out for help; what help? Before her sprang
 Mœra, and howl'd and barkt, and then return'd
 Pressaging. They had dragg'd the old man out
 And murdered him. Again flew Mœra forth,
 Faithful, compassionate, and seiz'd her vest,

And drew her where the body lay, unclosed
 The eyes, and rais'd toward the stars of heaven.
 Thou who hast listened, and still ponderest,
 Raise thine, for thou hast heard enough, raise thine
 And view Böotes bright among those stars,
 Brighter the Virgin : Mœra too shines there.
 But where were the Eumenides ? Repress
 Thy anger. If the clear calm stars above
 Appease it not, and blood must flow for blood,
 Harken, and hear the sequel of the tale.
 Wide-seeing Zeus lookt down ; as mortals knew
 By the woods bending under his dark eye,
 And huge towers shuddering on the mountain tops,
 And stillness in the valley, in the wold,
 And over the deep waters all round earth.
 He lifted up his arm, but struck them not
 In their abasement : by each other's blow
 They fell ; some suddenly ; but more beneath
 The desperate gasp of long-enduring wounds.

THE BOYS OF VENUS.

TWAIN are the boys of Venus : one surveys
 Benignly this our globe ; the other flies
 Cities and groves, nor listens to their songs
 Nor bears their converse ; hardly is he known
 By name among them ; cold as Eurus, pure
 As gusty rain.

What discord tore apart
 The brothers ? what beside ambition could ?
 The elder was aggriev'd to see the sparks
 Shoot from the younger's whetstone as he turn'd
 His arrow-barbs, nor pleas'd that he should waste
 Day after day in wreathing flowers for crowns,
 Or netting meshes to entrap the birds ;
 And, while rose incense to that idle child,
 To him were only empty honors paid.
 Bitterly to Silenus he complain'd,
 Entreating him to arbitrate his wrongs
 But hearing no remonstrance, mild as were
 The wise God's words ; they only fann'd his ire.
 " Call that Idalian," cried he, " then decide."
 He did so.

" Brother ! was it me you call'd ?"

Said the sweet child, whose wings were hanging down
Heavily from both shoulders, and his face
Suffused with shame.

“Will you not even own
Your little brother from Idalia? come,
Let us be friends.” Then, turning to the judge,
“Did he not send for me?”

To this appeal
Before Silenus could reply, before
He could, as now he tried, unite their hands,
“Yes,” interrupted the ferocious one,
“I did, that you may now learn who I am.”
Silenus smiled, and beckoning, fondly said
“Hither now! kiss each other; I may then
Say which is best: each shall have due reward,
And friend from friend.”

At this the lesser leapt
And threw his arms about his brother's neck
Turn'd scornfully away, yet many a kiss
He gave it; one, one only, was return'd;
For even the brother could not now resist,
Whether such godlike influence must prevail
Or whether of repulsing it ashamed;
Still neither would he his intent forego
Nor moderate his claim, nor cease to boast
How Chaos he subdued with radiant fire,
How from the sky its darkness he dispel'd,
And how the struggling planets he coerced,
Telling them to what distance they might go,
And chain'd the raging Ocean down with rocks.

“Is not all this enough for you?” replied
The gentler, “envy you my narrow realm?
Denying me my right you raise my plumes,
You make me boast that on my birth there-broke
Throughout the heavens above and earth below
A golden light. I do not recollect
What Chaos was, it was before my time;
Where flew the stars about I neither know
Nor care; but her who governs them I drew
Behind the Latmian cliffs, entreating me,
And promising me everything, to grant
Her first and last desire: tho' you reside
In heaven with her, and tho' she knows your fame,
She knows no love but what is scorn'd by you.
What are sea-shores to me? I penetrate
The inmost halls of Nereus; I command . .

Up spring the dolphins, and their purple backs
 I smoothe for timorous harper to bestride :
 At losing him, on the dry sands they pine.
 Desert you any one, he heeds it not,
 But let me leave him and funereal flames
 Burst from his bosom. Your last guest from earth,
 When I was angry with him, threw aside
 The spindle, broke the thread, and lay before
 The gate as any worthless herb might lie,
 And gamesome whelps lept over that broad breast.
 About the Gods above I would not say
 A word to vex you : whether rolls the orb
 We stand upon I know not, or who trims
 The fires ethereal, or who rules the tides.
 If these I yield to you, to me concede
 Free laughter and sly kiss ; fresh flowers give me,
 And songs the lyre delights in, give the lull
 Of reeds among the willows upon banks
 Where hollow moss invites and then betrays.
 Let me be happy ; some have call'd me strong ;
 Whether I am so, let recorded facts
 Declare, in every land perform'd by me
 Under the rising and the setting sun,
 Too numerous for a memory weak as mine."
 " Scarce more so than your promises," exclaim'd
 The taunter.

Smiling, blushing too, the child
 Acknowledged his forgetfulness . . at times . .
 But added,

" Do not make me boast again.
 If you pretend contempt for earthly cares
 And stand apart from nuptial scenes, and make
 No promises that leave so many blest,
 But turn aside your face and gaze upon
 The dismal depths, and Styx alone adjure,
 Pray tell me who made Pluto, by the pool
 Of that same Styx and panting Phlegethon
 Pant also, while the dog, with his three throats
 Growl'd and roar'd out ? who taught the unwilling bride
 To bear him ? it was I, it was my sport.
 In his dominions better deeds were mine.
 Following this torch and guided by this hand
 You might have heard amid the silent shades
 The water, drop by drop, fall from the urn
 Of the condemn'd ; the wheel you might have heard
 Creak, with no human groans from it ; thro' me

Laodameia met again the youth
She died for, and Eurydice met her's."

The generous Judge embraced the generous God,
Then tranquilly bespake the other thus.

"O worthy child of thy grave sire! to thee
I give the stars in keeping, with his leave,
And storms and seas and rocks that hold them in
With Neptune's, asking Amphitrite's too.
Thou, lesser of the winged ones! the source
Of genial smiles, who makest every sun
Roll brighter, and ten thousand fall far short
Of one such night as thou alone canst give;
Who holdest back the willing Hours at play,
And makest them run weariless aside
Thy quickest car! be thou with this content.
To thee do I assign thy modest claim.
Write it in thy own words . . . The linkèd hands,
And every flower that Spring most gladly wears,
And every song the quivering lyre of youth
Delights in; and the whispers of the reeds
Under the willows; and the mossy tuft
Dimpling but to betray: should anywhere
Be sweeter whispers, be they also thine
Do thou but" . . . then he blusht and lowered his head
Against the boy's . . . "touch gently with thy dart,
So that no mortal see . . . Ianthe's breast."

THE HAMADRYAD.

RHAICOS was born amid the hills wherefrom
Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,
And small are the white-crested that play near,
And smaller onward are the purple waves.
Thence festal choirs were visible, all crown'd
With rose and myrtle if they were inborn;
If from Pandion sprang they, on the coast
Where stern Athenè raised her citadel,
Then olive was intertwined with violets
Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large.
For various men wore various coronals;
But one was their devotion: 'twas to her
Whose laws all follow, her whose smile withdraws

The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from Zeus,
 And whom in his chill caves the mutable
 Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, reveres,
 And whom his brother, stubborn Dis, hath pray'd
 To turn in pity the averted cheek
 Of her he bore away, with promises,
 Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx itself,
 To give her daily more and sweeter flowers
 Than he made drop from her on Enna's dell.

Rhaicos was looking from his father's door
 At the long trains that hastened to the town
 From all the valleys, like bright rivulets
 Gurgling with gladness, wave outrunning wave,
 And thought it hard he might not also go
 And offer up one prayer, and press one hand,
 He knew not whose. The father call'd him in,
 And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle games;
 Long enough I have lived to find them so."
 And ere he ended, sighed; as old men do
 Always, to think how idle such games are.
 "I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in his heart,
 And wanted proof.

"Suppose thou go and help
 Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak
 And lop its branches off, before we delve
 About the trunk and ply the root with axe:
 This we may do in winter."

Rhaicos went;
 For thence he could see farther, and see more
 Of those who hurried to the city-gate.
 Echeion he found there, with naked arm
 Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his eyes intent
 Upon the place where first the axe should fall:
 He held it upright. "There are bees about,
 Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious eld,
 "Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The youth
 Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,
 And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a buzz
 At first, and then the sound grew soft and clear,
 And then divided into what seem'd tune,
 And there were words upon it, plaintive words.
 He turn'd, and said, "Echeion! do not strike
 That tree: it must be hollow; for some God
 Speaks from within. Come thyself near." Again
 Both turn'd toward it: and behold! there sat
 Upon the moss below, with her two palms

Pressing it on each side, a maid in form.
 Downcast were her long eyelashes, and pale
 Her cheek, but never mountain-ash display'd
 Berries of colour like her lip so pure,
 Nor were the anemones about her hair
 Soft, smooth, and wavering, like the face beneath.

"What dost thou here?" Echeion, half-afraid,
 Half-angry, cried. She lifted up her eyes,
 But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew one step
 Backward, for fear came likewise over him,
 But not such fear: he panted, gaspt, drew in
 His breath, and would have turn'd it into words,
 But could not into one.

"O send away
 That sad old man!" said she. The old man went
 Without a warning from his master's son,
 Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,
 And the axe shone behind him in their eyes.

Hamadryad. And wouldst thou too shed the most innocent
 Of blood? no vow demands it; no God wills
 The oak to bleed.

Rhaicos. Who art thou? whence? why here?
 And whither wouldst thou go? Among the robed
 In white or saffron, or the hue that most
 Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none
 Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful
 As that gray robe which clings about thee close,
 Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to trees,
 Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,
 As, toucht by zephyrs, fall and rise the boughs
 Of graceful platan by the river-side.

Hamadryad. Lovest thou well thy father's house?

Rhaicos. Indeed

I love it, well I love it, yet would leave
 For thine, where'er it be, my father's house,
 With all the marks upon the door, that show
 My growth at every birth-day since the third,
 And all the charms, o'erpowering evil eyes,
 My mother nail'd for me against my bed,
 And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)
 Won in my race last spring from Eutychos.

Hamadryad. Bethink thee what it is to leave a home
 Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.

Rhaicos. No, 'tis not hard to leave it; 'tis not hard
 To leave, O maiden, that paternal home,
 If there be one on earth whom we may love

First, last, for ever ; one who says that she
Will love for ever too. To say which word,
Only to say it, surely is enough . .
It shows such kindness . . if 'twere possible
We at the moment think she would indeed.

Hamadryad. Who taught thee all this folly at thy age ?

Rhaicos. I have seen lovers and have learnt to love.

Hamadryad. But wilt thou spare the tree ?

Rhaicos. My father wants

The bark ; the tree may hold its place awhile.

Hamadryad. Awhile ! thy father numbers then my days ?

Rhaicos. Are there no others where the moss beneath
Is quite as tufty ? Who would send thee forth
Or ask thee why thou tarriest ? Is thy flock
Anywhere near ?

Hamadryad. I have no flock : I kill
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful
(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source
Whence springs all beauty ? Hast thou never heard
Of Hamadryads ?

Rhaicos. Heard of them I have :
Tell me some tale about them. May I sit
Beside thy feet ? Art thou not tired ? The herbs
Are very soft ; I will not come too nigh ;
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.
Stay, stay an instant : let me first explore
If any acorn of last year be left
Within it ; thy thin robe too ill protects
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small
Acorn may do. Here's none. Another day
Trust me ; till then let me sit opposite.

Hamadryad. I seat me ; be thou seated, and content.

Rhaicos. O sight for gods ! Ye men below ! adore
The Aphroditè. *Is* she there below ?
Or sits she here before me ? as she sate
Before the shepherd on those highths that shade
The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.

Hamadryad. Reverence the higher Powers ; nor deem amiss
Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay . .
Ask not how much . . but very much. Rise not :
No, Rhaicos, no ! Without the nuptial vow
Love is unholy. Swear to me that none
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,
Then take thou mine ; then take it, not before.

Rhaicos. Hearken, all gods above ! O Aphroditè !

O Herè! let my vow be ratified!

But wilt thou come into my father's house?

Hamadryad. Nay: and of mine I can not give thee part.

Rhaicos. Where is it?

Hamadryad.

In this oak.

Rhaicos.

Ay; now begins

The tale of Hamadryad: tell it through.

Hamadryad. Pray of thy father never to cut down

My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,

That every year he shall receive from me

More honey than will buy him nine fat sheep,

More wax than he will burn to all the gods.

Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn

May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up; for shame!

Rhaicos. For shame I can not rise. O pity me!

I dare not sue for love . . . but do not hate!

Let me once more behold thee . . . not once more,

But many days: let me love on . . . unloved!

I aimed too high: on my head the bolt

Falls back, and pierces to the very brain.

Hamadryad. Go . . . rather go, than make me say I love.

Rhaicos. If happiness is immortality,

(And whence enjoy it else the gods above?)

I am immortal too: my vow is heard:

Hark! on the left . . . Nay, turn not from me now,

I claim my kiss.

Hamadryad. Do men take first, then claim?

Do thus the seasons run their course with them?

. . . Her lips were seal'd, her head sank on his breast.

'Tis said that laughs were heard within the wood:

But who should hear them? . . . and whose laughs? and why?

Savoury was the smell, and long past noon,

Thallinos! in thy house; for marjoram,

Basil and mint, and thyme and rosemary,

Were sprinkled on the kid's well roasted length,

Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at last,

Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,

With head and eyes just o'er the maple plate.

"Thou seest but badly, coming from the sun,

Boy Rhaicos!" said the father. "That oak's bark

Must have been tough, with little sap between;

It ought to run; but it and I are old."

Rhaicos, although each morsel of the bread

Increase by chewing, and the meat grew cold

And tasteless to his palate, took a draught

Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he was,
 He thought not of until his father fill'd
 The cup, averring water was amiss,
 But wine had been at all times pour'd on kid,
 It was religion.

He thus fortified
 Said, not quite boldly, and not quite abasht,
 "Father, that oak is Zeusis' own; that oak
 Year after year will bring thee wealth from wax
 And honey. There is one who fears the gods
 And the gods love . . . that one"

(He blusht, nor said

What one)

"Hath promist this, and may do more.

We have not many moons to wait until
 The bees have done their best: if then there come
 Nor wax nor honey, let the trees be hewn."

"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a prudent mind,"
 Said the glad sire: "but look thou often there,
 And gather all the honey thou canst find
 In every crevice, over and above
 What hath been promist; would they reckon that?"

Rhaicos went daily; but the nymph as oft
 Invisible. To play at love, she knew,
 Stopping its breathings when it breathes most soft,
 Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.
 She play'd on his: she fed upon his sighs;
 They pleas'd her when they gently waved her hair,
 Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,
 And when her absence brought them out they pleas'd.
 Even among the fondest of them all,
 What mortal or immortal maid is more
 Content with giving happiness than pain?
 One day he was returning from the wood
 Despondently. She pitied him, and said
 "Come back!" and twined her fingers in the hem
 Above his shoulder. Then she led his steps
 To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand
 Through lentisk and through oleander, there
 Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her lap
 When bathed, and drying them in both her hands.
 He dared complain; for those who most are loved
 Most dare it; but not harsh was his complaint.
 "O thou inconstant!" said he, "if stern law
 Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest law,
 O, let me know henceforward when to hope

The fruit of love that grows for me but here." He spake; and pluckt it from its pliant stem. "Impatient Rhaicos! why thus intercept The answer I would give? There is a bee Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts And executes my wishes: I will send That messenger. If ever thou art false, Drawn by another, own it not, but drive My bee away: then shall I know my fate, And, . . . for thou must be wretched, . . . weep at thine. But often as my heart persuades to lay Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest, Expect her with thee, whether it be morn, Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them blest, And season after season: years had past, Blest were they still. He who asserts that Love Ever is sated of sweet things, the same Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days, Never, by Zeus! loved he a Hamadryad.

The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps The Hamadryads find them lone and dull Among their woods; one did, alas! She called Her faithful bee: 'twas when all bees should sleep, And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth To bring that light which never wintry blast Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes, The light that shines from loving eyes upon Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.

Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth: Between them stood the table, not o'erspread With fruits which autumn now profusely bore, Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine; but there The draft-board was expanded; at which game Triumphant sat old Thallinos; the son Was puzzled, vexed, discomfited, distraught. A buzz was at his ear: up went his hand, And it was heard no longer. The poor bee Return'd (but not until the morn shone bright) And found the Hamadryad with her head Upon her aching wrist, and showed one wing Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd, And there were bruises which no eye could see Saving a Hamadryad's.

At this sight

Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down,
 A shriek was carried to the ancient hall
 Of Thallinos: he heard it not: his son
 Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.
 No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,
 The trunk was riven through. From that day forth
 Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear, nor sound
 Even of insect wing: but loud laments
 The woodmen and the shepherds one long year
 Heard day and night; for Rhaicos would not quit
 The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,
 To find set duly on the hollow stone.

 DRYOPE.

CETA was glorious; proud of ancestry
 There Dryops reign'd: Spercheios was his sire,
 His mother Polydora; but above
 All ancestry went forth his daughter's fame,
 Dryope, loved by him whose radiant car
 Surmounts the heavens. With light he irrigates
 The earth beneath, to all things gives their hue,
 Motion, and graceful form, and harmony:
 But now the tresses of his golden hair
 Wills he to fall and his warm breath to breathe
 On Dryope alone; her he pursues
 Among the willow of pubescent flower
 And fragrant bark stript off the tender twigs,
 Moist, split, and ready for the basket-braid.
 He followed her along the river-bank,
 Along the shallow where the Nereids meet
 The Dryads.

She was tending once her flock
 In a deep valley, when there suddenly
 Burst forth the sound of horn and pipe, and clash
 Of cymbal rattling from uplifted palms;
 Dryad and Hamadryad, wild with joy,
 Ran on before, ran on behind; one stopt
 And cried to her, ere past . . .

“ Art thou alone

Forgetful of the day, our festival?
 Is Dryops greater than Admetos, king
 But shepherd too: Apollo watcht his flock,
 Apollo scared the stealing wolves away,
 And even Apollo now is scared from thine!
 Thus daughters place their seat above their sire's."

Dryope laught, no little proud, at taunt
 Like this.

And now the revels were begun,
 And circling dance succeeded; and the day
 Closed with the chorus of the pæan hymn.
 Weary with dancing Dryope reclined
 On the soft herbage: lo! before her feet
 Shone forth a lyre amidst it; whose that lyre
 Each askt, and none replied, for surely each
 Had hers: was it Antonoë's? was it like
 Theano's? Whose-soever it might be
 She took it, and with twinkling finger ran
 Over the chords: and now at one she glanced
 Now at another, with a nod that said
 She knew their mischief, and to punish them
 She thrust it in her bosom. Ha! behold!
 A snake glides out. All shriek aloud, all throw
 Their bodies back and spring up all at once.
 Antonoë dasht upon her fragil reed
 Her tender hand in rising, but scarce felt
 The wound until she saw one ruddy globe
 Enlarging, then she shuddered, then she suckt
 The whole away, and but two rims appear'd.
 Faster the others ran, they knew not where,
 Thro' every field about: the choral shell
 Around whose loosen'd strings the snake had coil'd
 Was now all snake. He rusht on Dryope,
 So slow in due performance of the rites,
 Rites which the fathers for their God ordain'd.
 Then spake Antonoë to the only Nymph
 Remaining nigh, still fleeing both away,
 Both looking back; for pity rose o'er fear.
 "See! see! the wicked serpent! how he licks
 Her eyes and bosom! how he bends her down
 When she would rise and run away! where now
 Can be Apollo, proud of Python slain?
 Scorn'd by one inexperienced, fear'd by one
 Silly, he seems to think that Fear can win
 Where Love was driven off.

Help, Phœbus, help!

How swells the creature's neck ! how fierce his crest !
 A cloud hides all below. The dragon race
 Is various : now they shake their scales on earth,
 Now shine their feathers in the sky ; now flame
 In cars athwart ; now their hard bodies melt
 In the thin air nor leave a trace behind."

Deep in a woody dell beneath a cliff,
 Scarce daring yet to lift her eyes above
 The lowest bush, Callianeira held
 Diaula, dubious to run on or stay,
 And argued with her thus.

"Since now the grass
 In the warm spring lies closer and grows higher,
 And many things may at first sight deceive,
 Might it not be a lizard she caught up
 Into her bosom ? What is pleasanter
 Than in hot days to hold a lizard there
 Panting, and gently with a finger's tip
 Provoke its harmless bite ? The species seems
 Rare, it is true. Behold how sisterly
 Dryope treats it."

"Lizard ! no indeed !"
 Replied the maiden with wide-open eyes,
 "No lizard can be seen a whole field off,
 Nor so spring up as that bold animal."
 Neither Diaula nor her arguer dared
 Proceede : Callianeira went alone
 Toward Dryope midway.

Again, whate'er
 It was erewhile, the form is changed ; no more
 A serpent, nor indeed a lizard now,
 Nor chelys, is that orb by purple veil'd
 One moment and then alter'd into white ;
 As violets under hailstones when the wind
 Blows hurriedly and fitfully above.
 Then partly mused and partly uttered some.
 "That hair is surely hers : another Nymph
 Not of our company, and practised more
 In quelling serpents, may have intervened,
 Or witch in gleeful mischief played her pranks.
 What hand is under her ? what hair like hers
 Is waving over ?"

Delius now appear'd
 Himself among them, and with radiant nod
 And arm outstretcht recall'd the fugitives,
 Drawing his purple vest more closely round.

They came with downcast eyes, remembering well
 Their terror when he lent his lofty car
 To that ambitious son, and how the lakes
 Shrank under him, and how the rivers paus'd
 In silence, and how Po himself, although
 From heaven descended, was enwrapt in flames ;
 Remembering too the clangor of his bow
 Bent against Python, when Diana's self
 Trembled at her deliverer : well they knew
 The power, for good or evil, of the God,
 And kept the fearful secret in their breasts.

Soon they recovered ; soon they pitied her
 The victim of such cruelty : the words
 Of pity Dryope well understood,
 Replying not. They lookt into her eyes
 A little languid ; on her neck they lookt
 A little moist ; they own'd her pouting lip
 Was worthy of the God.

Each slyly askt
 Some little question ; she could only blush.
 Slowly, nor staying to reprove, she went
 Amid their giggles to her father's house.
 They, growing bolder, might mayhap have told
 The tale to others, but had gazed too near
 For bashful Nymphs ; beside, Diana's wrath
 They dreaded if her brother they betraid.

Dryope, now Andræmon's happy spouse
 And mother of Amphissos, every spring
 Is celebrated thro' the groves and vales
 Of Cæta, where the pæan had been sung.

CORESUS AND CALLIRHOË.

WITH song and dance the maids of Calydon
 Had met to celebrate the yearly rites
 Of Bacchus. Where two taller whirl around
 The rope, and call another to run in,
 A wanton one pusht forward her who stood
 Aside her ; when she stumbled they all laught
 To see her upright heels and scattered hair.
 'Twas then, Callirhoë, that thy mother fail'd

Even with prayer to bring thee back again
 Before the altar : it is said a tear
 Roll'd down thy cheek from shame, and not without
 A blush of anger . . . who on earth can vouch
 For this ? since both thy hands hid both thy cheeks.

Rising from his high seat the youthful priest
 Came forward, pitying her : of graceful mien
 Coresus was, and worthy of his God.
 Ah poor Coresus ! luckless was the hour
 Of his first meeting her ; there might have been
 Hour more propitious ; she perhaps had loved
 Distractedly the youth she now abhor'd ;
 He too, unless her blushes and her tears
 Had penetrated deep his generous heart,
 Might have loved on and sung his woes away.
 Now neither butting goat nor honeyed must
 Pour'd by the straining boys between his horns
 Regarded he ; no, nor with wonted cheer
 Appear'd to him the God of gamesome glee.
 Not even when Hesper call'd his winking train
 Around him, and when shook the lower shrubs
 More than the breeze had shaken them erewhile,
 Would he decline his aching eyes to sleep ;
 But out of the inclosure, where the grass
 Was rank with fallen leaves and heavy dew,
 Lonely he stood beneath an ilex shade,
 And meditated long and soon forgot
 The words he had to say : he could recall
 (He thought) her features, but before him rose
 A face less beautiful, not less severe.
 Many the days he sought the maid in vain,
 Many the nights he stood before the house ;
 She waits not even to be seen ; no foot
 Passes her door, and the dog barks, but straight
 Up springs she from her chair ; she surely hears
 And knows his tread ; what other can it be ?
 When she would break a thread off with her teeth
 She stops, and holds it in a trembling hand
 Suspended, just above the humid lip
 White now with fear ; and often her loose locks
 She dashes back to place a surer ear
 Against the hinge : is any footfall heard
 Passing the portico, he steps that way ;
 If soft the sound, he stands there, none but he :
 If none, he certainly is close behind.

The reed grows harder from perpetual winds,

From fears perpetual harder grows the maid.
 At first Callirhoë scarcely would confess
 To her own mother, scarcely to herself ;
 Now she is ready, now she is resolved
 With savage speech his fondness to repay,
 Words she would gather for his punishment,
 And is more angry when she finds not one ;
 An aggravation of his past offence.

Flexible is the coral branch beneath
 The Erythræan sea ; to air exposed
 It stiffens, no strong hand can bend it back :
 Such was her nature : she had laid aside
 Her former manners ; its ingenuous shame
 Quitted that cheek it lately discomposed ;
 Crowds she avoided not, nor greatly cared
 If others knew what she but yesterday
 Was vext at knowing : she rejoiced to hear
 A name she loath'd so late. Vainglory caught
 And made a plaything of an empty heart.
 When she hears footsteps from behind, she checks
 Her own, to let him either stop or pass ;
 She would not wish his love nor him away,
 Conscious that she is walking over fire
 Unwounded, on a level with the Gods,
 And rendering null the noblest gifts they gave.

Where grows a dittany that heals the smart
 Love's broken arrow leaves within the breast ?
 He loves not who such anguish can endure,
 He who can burst asunder such a bond
 Loves not.

Hard-breathing from his inmost soul
 Coresus seiz'd her hand, then threw it back
 And pour'd forth with stern look these bitter words.
 " No longer ask I pity on my grief,
 Callirhoë ! 'tis unworthy of us both,
 But there is one who knows it, one above,
 And will avenge it. Thou hast seen the last
 Of all the tears these eyes will ever shed ;
 This grieves me, and this only . . Pestilence
 Now stalks in darkness on from street to street,
 And slow steps follow : wasted, worn away,
 The aged are gone forth to learn the will
 Of those we worship ; and their late return,
 Lookt for since dawn from all the higher roofs,
 In vain is lookt for. Thro' the city lie
 Children whom dying parents would embrace,

Innocent children! they have not been spared,
And shall the guilty before heaven escape?

I was contemn'd, and I deserv'd contempt,
I loved imprudently; yet throughout life
Those arts I cherisht which lead youth aright,
And strengthen manhood and adorn old-age.
Old-age! for me there will be none: my brow
Hath worn its crown . . . for what? that festal songs
May rise around the altar, sung by thee.
Worthy I was to woo, and woo I did;
I am unworthy now, and now abstain,
Subjected to the levity of all,
Even my own friends: and yet might I have stood
Above those equal-aged, whether the prize
Were olive, given by heroes, whether bay
Which only Gods, and they on few, bestow,
Or whether, O Callirhoë! in thy love.

Let kings throw largesses around, let earth
And ocean be explored that vulgar eyes
May gaze at vulgar heads rais'd somewhat higher,
The Gods alone give genius, they alone
Give beauty . . . why so seldom to unite!
She shines her hour, and then the worshiper
Rises and goes. Genius stands cold, apart,
Like Saturn in the skies; his aspect seems,
To mortal men below, oblique, malign . . ."

While he was speaking and about to pause,
Downcast, with silent and slow step approacht
They who went forth to touch with purest hands
The altar, and appease the offended Powers.
The virgin saw them coming; soon she heard
A crowd's tumultuous outcries and turned pale;
But paler was Coresus who presaged
The impending evil; paler when he heard
Curses and (painfuller) immodest speech.
He hastened to withdraw her; but aloud
Palæmon cried,

"Stay here! stay here thou too
O wretched girl! and take the words I bring,
The God's own words: no longer shall the throng
Around thee rise infuriate, nor shall maids
And matrons turn on thee their dying look
Or call the torch funereal by thy name."

Impatient and exultant sprang the youth;
Wildly he threw his arms around her neck,
Then, falling on his knees,

“Hail thou,” he cried,
 “Who fillest with thy deity the grove
 Of high Dodona, and with brow serene
 Hast clear’d the troubled sky!

She lives! she lives!

The source of sorrow to none else than me:
 Neither my dreams nor Bacchus promist this.”
 Palæmon, after solemn silence, spake:

“Alas! how sadly do young hopes deceive!
 The sight of future things was granted thee
 In vain: Love lowers his saffron veil, runs off,
 And thro’ the dimness thou seest only Love.
 Forward, ye youths! since Jupiter ordains,
 And since the son of Semele hath deign’d
 To honour and avenge his chosen priest,
 Lead the peace-offering, the pure victim, forth . .
 Lead forth Callirhoë.”

Thro’ the maiden’s veins
 The blood crept cold: she staggered, fell . . upheav’d
 And drag’d away by some strong arm, she reacht
 The temple: consciousness (not soon) return’d
 Thro’ the loud trappings, on the marble floor,
 Of those who carried incense fresh-alight,
 And the salt sprinklings from the frigid font.

“Take,” said Palæmon, trembling as he spake,
 “Take thou this sword, Coresus! ’tis thy part.
 Often hast thou the avenging Gods invoked,
 And wouldst thou cast aside the vows they grant?
 Impious! impossible! no grace is this
 To thee, but sign to all that in his priest
 Wrong’d and offended is the God he serves,
 Warning to all that vows be wisely vow’d.
 But if among this concourse there stand one
 Who pities so the victim, that for hers
 He yields his life, then shall the pestilence,
 Under Jove’s saving son, our Bacchus, cease.”

With his vein’d hand a tear the youth swept off:
 Less mournfully than scornfully said he,

“Listen! how swift, how still, their steps retreat!
 Now then, Callirhoë! now my breast is firm;
 None stand before me: in a father’s place
 And in a lover’s I will here discharge
 No empty duty.”

Cries and groans are heard,
 And seen upon the pavement where he stood
 His writhing limbs.

With sudden terror flies
 The crowd bewildered, dreading lest a blood
 So sacred should run on and reach their feet.
 The temple and the grove around it moan,
 And other murmurs, other cries, than rose
 So lately, fill the city and the plain.

First flies the rumour that the priest had fallen
 By his own hand; it gathered force, and soon
 That both were smitten by the wrathful Gods.
 From its own weight is that vast multitude
 Pusht onward, driven back, conglomerated,
 Broken, disperst, like waves on stormy seas.

CATILLUS AND SALIA.

AGAINST the lintel of Voltumna's fane,
 Which from the Cyminus surveys the lake
 And grove of ancient oaks, Catillus left
 His spear; his steed stood panting, and afraid
 Sometimes of sight obscure, sometimes of sound
 Strange to him, of wild beast or falling bark
 Blackened by fire, and even of wither'd leaves
 Whirl'd by the wind above his bridle-bit.

"Voltumna," cried the youth, "do not reject
 My vow to Salia; she despiseth not,
 Nor doth her father, love so pure as mine;
 But there are oracles which both believe
 Are obstacles against the nuptial torch.
 Goddess! thou knowest what the Powers above
 Threaten, for from thy fane the threats proceed,
 Thine be it all such sorrow to dispell!
 Amphiaräus could, not long ago,
 Have taught me what impended; with him went
 His art, alas! he with his car of fire
 Sunk near Ismenos."

Ancient bards have sung
 That the king's house and king himself must fall,
 And that his daughter, when she weds, will bring
 Destruction on them both. Her braver heart
 Sees thro' the oracles, at first obscure,
 Nor fears to love me; should not I abide
 The fate of arms, whatever it may be?

I would not they should part us ; I would now
 And ever be with her, altho' the Gods
 So will that we must pass the Stygian pool
 Or, what is worse, roam thro' the stranger's land.
 O Salia ! be thou mine a single day,
 Another's never, nor a banisht man's."

A hollow murmur moves the forest heads,
 The temple gloams, and from the inner shrine
 A voice is heard, " Unhappy daughter ! sprung
 Of parent more unhappy, thus forewarn'd
 Of coming woe." The voices ceast . . the groves
 Afar resounded when the portal closed.

Silence more awful followed, thro' the sky
 And lofty wood and solitary fane ;
 If any bird winged over, in that bird
 He saw not whence might come an augury
 To solace his torn heart ; among dense shade
 Some there might be ; but over all the lake
 He heard no sound, no swan was visible,
 For shining afar off they floated high,
 Or smooth'd their wings upon the swelling wave.

Now he thro' shady fields of trellised vine
 Waving o'er-head, and thin-leaved olives hied.
 'Twas evening ; on the earth he threw himself,
 Hoping some dream might waft away his dread.
 Sharp was the radiance of the stars above,
 And all the sky seem'd moving in a course
 It never yet had moved in ; what he heard
 Beneath the roof of Anius, and within
 The temple of Voltumna, now return'd,
 And what seem'd there so difficult, he felt
 Plain to expound and easy to achieve.

The daughter and the father he resolves
 To save forthwith ; he snatches up the rein,
 Leaps on his charger, and ere breaks the dawn
 Reaches the city-gate : few sentries stood
 Before or near it, long enjoying peace.
 Well might the troop have known their youthful friend,
 Broad-chested, of high brow, of lustrous eye,
 Familiar speech, large heart and liberal hand,
 And prompt on horse or foot with Argive spear.
 Fast went he to the mansion of the king.
 Beneath the gateway Periphas he meets,
 Seizes his hand, " I haste to Salia,"
 Cries he, " Voltumna threatens mortal woe,
 Woe which her father never can avert.

Piety may be blind, love open-eyed
Is ever on the watch : I bring with me
The Goddess's own words, words now confirmed
By surest omens, even by my dreams."

Unhappy Salia had already past.
She early every morning sacrificed
To Dian in the little fane anear
The city-gate : the hero's threatening steed
Neigh'd, and the palace-archway sounded loud
From frequent tramps of his impatient hoof.
It was the hour when each expiring lamp
Crackled beneath, now showing, hiding now,
The chain it hung by ; when the hind prepar'd
To throw upon the slowly rising ox
His wooden collar, slow himself, morose
With broken sleep ; along the lower sky
Reddened a long thin line of light that show'd
But indistinctly the divided fields.
Catillus meets his Salia, " Fly," cries he,
" Fly while 'tis possible ; the Gods have given
Sure omens ; now distrust them never more."
He lifts her, ere she answers, on the steed,
Leaps on it after, spurs with rapid heel
The flank, and off they fly. " Now tremble not,
My Salia, there was room and time for fear
When flight was difficult and hope unsure.
Dian, to bless thy pious vow, had given
What now Voltumna gives ; fallacious dream
Came never from her fane. Feel, Salia, feel
How quiet, without snort and without shy,
Moves under us the generous beast we ride !
Is then my arm too tight around thy waist ?
I will relax this bondage . . and still sigh !
Weary thou must be ; we will here dismount
And leave behind us the brave beast to rest
Under the roof-tree of that cottage near,
We will reward him for his oaten bread,
And for the skiff he idly lies along."

Large was the recompense ; the pair imbarkt ;
The hinds stood wondering, " *Are they then some Gods ?*"
Muttered he to himself.

The little sail
Catillus hoisted, hoisted leisurely,
That he might turn it whatsoever breeze
Haply should rise, but more that he might sit
On the same thwart, and near enough to screen

The face of Salia from the level sun,
 And any gazers from the banks they pass.
 Catillus listened ; and whatever voice
 Came to his ear, he shuddered at, but most
 Dreaded lest Fescennine loose song reach hers.
 Cautious he was of meeting the approach
 Of the Volsinians ; he would then avoid
 The flowery fields that Farfar's rills refresh,
 And those too where, when Sirius flames above,
 Himella guides her little stream away.
 Therefore he wisely wore a coarse attire,
 Unrecognized, and seem'd a stranger hind
 Returning to his kin at even-tide.
 His crest and spear beneath dense rushes lay.
 Long was the way by land, by water long,
 Nor would he, if he could, say what remain'd
 To travel yet. "Thou seest with how mild light
 Hesper advances, oscillating
 Alone upon the water ; how befriends us
 The pale and tender sky ; earth, water, heaven,
 Conspire to help us." Sleepless, nor inclined
 To slumber, both form dreams : supreme the bliss
 Soon to be theirs, if but one touch inflames
 Each thrilling fibre with such high delight.
 Never be wise, ye youths ; be credulous ;
 Happiness rests upon credulity.
 Why should I, were it possible, relate
 In what discourses hour succeeded hour,
 How calm the woods, how rich the cultured fields,
 Or in how many places they could spend
 Their lives most willingly, or why recount
 The girlish fears when any sudden swell
 A hand's-breadth high rose up against the skiff,
 Or lower bough and slender toucht her cheek ?
 Catillus too was not without his fears ;
 Whether some silent woman crept along
 The river side, expecting the return
 Of tardy husband, or burst suddenly
 The light from cottage near, or fisherman
 Crown'd the black corks along his net with flames.
 All night their watery way do they pursue.
 At dawn Catillus willingly was borne
 On where the stream grew lighter ; to the right
 He left those seven hills, of name unknown,
 Where dwelt Evander : upon one had stood
 A fortress built by Saturn, opposite

Had Janus rais'd one ; both were now decayed ;
 Catillus wonder'd how such mighty piles
 Could ever perish. He had soon arrived
 Upon the borders of his native home.
 He took the maiden's hand ; he prest her chin,
 Raising it up to cheer her, and he said,
 " 'Tis lawful now to visit those abrupt
 And shattered rocks, that headlong stream, that cave
 Resounding with the voices of the Nymphs :
 Here is thy domicile, thy country here,
 And here the last of all thy cares shall rest.
 Preserv'd by thee thy sire, thy faith preserv'd,
 Anius will not regret that thou hast shown
 Obedience to the Gods, and given to him
 A son who will not shame him by the choice.
 Think, who will envy us our rural life ?
 What savage mortal carry thee away ?
 Thy father's kingdom who will dare invade ?
 We have our own, let every other rest !
 Now peace be with the Sabines.* May thy sire
 Enjoy it long, unanxious and secure !
 Instead of realm for dower, instead of gates
 With soldiers for their bars, be thou content
 With the deep wood where never Mars was heard
 Above the Tiber ere he leaps and foams,
 Or doze where under willowy banks obscure
 Pareusius gently winds his gleamy wave.
 Look ! what a distance we have left behind !
 How the fields narrow which we thought so vast !
 How the sun reaches down the city-wall
 Even to the base, and glows with yellower light." †
 Whereat her eyes she raises, but not yet
 To his ; the ancient city she surveys
 Dimly thro' tears, " Live, O my father ! live,
 Be comforted, be happy ! If Voltumna
 Commands it, never let thy love for me
 Obstruct our pious duties : let me live
 Amid the solid darkness of these woods,
 Or see nought else than that mysterious lake †
 Which other than its own shades wrap in gloom,
 Enough for me if thee I leave at rest."
 Catillus heard the pious wish, and said,
 " Behold that rest at last by thee secured !

* Plutarc reckons as Sabines the Volsinians. The nations of Italy often changed their boundaries.

† Small islands composed of weeds float upon the lake.

However might Voltumna have desired
 One so devout and duteous to retain,
 She bade thee go, for she had heard thy prayer.
 Now art thou mine indeed, now lawfully
 And safely love and liberty are ours ;
 No deities oppose us : here is home."
 He raises up his helm ; it lights the copse
 With splendour ; soon the rural youth come down
 With oxen reeking from laborious plough,
 And war-horse after his long rest from toil.
 Yet, slower with all these auxiliaries
 The hours moved on than when the oar at eve
 Was thrown upon the thwart, and when the winds
 Had their own will.

Catillus would not land
 Near bare and open downs ; he knew a path
 Safer and pleasanter, where soft and cool
 About the hazels rose high grass o'er moss.
 " But, Salia ! one step farther . . let us on,
 And we shall view from that so short ascent
 Our own domains, our Tibur."

They had reacht
 The summit : thence what sees she opposite ?
 Only the wavy willows bend their heads .
 Below her, only higher elms o'er shade
 The darker herbage, and their trailing vines
 Which pat and pat again the passant stream.
 What sees she then, fastening immovably
 Her eyes upon one object ? why so pale ?
 Her father ! at first sight of him her limbs
 Stiffen to stone.

He from across exclaims,
 " Stay thee, O wretched girl ! whom wouldst thou fly ? "
 She wrencht her feet from where they stood, and flew
 Faster at every word, but slower seem'd
 Her flight to her at every step she took.
 Doubtful it was to those upon the walls
 Whether she drew the youth along, his spear
 Holding as now she did in mortal dread,
 Or whether he was guiding, to assure
 Her footsteps ; she was foremost of the two
 Where the road was not wide enough for both,
 He where the incumbent rock was hard to climb.
 Indignant Anius watches them mount up,
 Watches them enter thro' the city-gate
 Amid loud trumpets and applause as loud.

He raged not, wail'd not, but both hands comprest
 His burning brow. How bitter must be grief
 That such sweet scenes one moment fail to lull!
 Fixt stood he just above the cave profound
 Whence flows Pareusius, but the torrent's roar
 He heard not; saw not the white dust of spray
 Return above it over mead and wood,
 Wherein are many birds that raise the throat,
 Pouring a song inaudible, and more
 That fly the eternal thunder; for their nests
 Were not built there, nor there their loves inspired.
 Others protect their brood with cowering wing
 Or flit around to bring them food, unscared.

“The world as ever let Injustice rule,
 Let men and Gods look on and little heed,
 Let violence overturn the bust, and spill
 The treasured ashes, yet above the tomb
 Sits holy Grief, and watchful Muse warns off
 Oblivion.

Why, O Powers above! from lands
 The fairest on the earth, why should complaint
 Rise up from mortal to your blest abode?
 Why from a father's breast, from Anius?
 Who offered ever gifts more cheerfully
 Before your altars, or with purer hands?”
 Anius smote his breast, and gaspt and groan'd,

“Piety! where now find it! She deserts
 Her parent, conscious as she can but be
 Of ills impending: kind, religious, chaste,
 All ever thought her; so she was to all,
 Alas! that I alone could not deserve
 To be, as faithless stranger is, beloved!”

A pause ensued, and then with bitter scorn,
 “Now learn I what a daughter's duty is!
 O partner of my sorrows and my joys,
 Whose sole contention throughout life was which
 Should be the fonder parent of the two,
 If Libitina had prolonged thy days
 How wouldst thou mourn such contest! I have since
 Assumed thy place: when any little pain
 Befell her, light as may be, could I rest?
 Could I away from her bedside?”

He dasht
 The tear from off his burning cheek, and cried
 In agony and desperate, “Go then; seize
 The nuptial torch, and sing endearing song,

As once at home ; let down the saffron veil . .
 And be thy child, if child thou have, like thee.
 If other rites thou hast omitted all,
 If without dower, such dower as king should give
 With daughter, if it shames thee not to run
 Hither and thither over foreign lands,
 The fault is mine, thy father's : that one fault
 I now will expiate ; I can yet afford
 One victim." At these words, there where the rocks
 Protrude above the channel they burst through,
 Headlong he cast himself from crag to crag ;
 And then rose reddened the resurgent spray.
 The deed is unforgotten, and the stream
 Is now called Anio since that fatal hour.

ENALLOS AND CYMODAMEIA

A VISION came o'er three young men at once,
 A vision of Apollo : each had heard
 The same command ; each followed it ; all three
 Assembled on one day before the God
 In Lycia, where he gave his oracle.
 Bright shone the morning ; and the birds that build
 Their nests beneath the column-heads of fanes
 And eaves of humbler habitations, dropt
 From under them and wheel'd athwart the sky,
 When, silently and reverently, the youths
 Marcht side by side up the long steps that led
 Toward the awful God who dwelt within.
 Of those three youths fame hath held fast the name
 Of one alone ; nor would that name survive
 Unless Love had sustain'd it, and blown off
 With his impatient breath the mists of time.
 "Ye come," the God said mildly, "of one will
 To people what is desert in the isle
 Of Lemnos : but strong men possess its shores ;
 Nor shall you execute the brave emprize
 Unless, on the third day from going forth,
 To him who rules the waters ye devote
 A virgin, cast into the sea alive."
 They heard, and lookt in one another's face,
 And then bent piously before the shrine
 With prayer and praises and thanksgiving hymn,

And, after a short silence, went away,
 Taking each other's hand and swearing truth,
 Then to the ship in which they came, return'd.
 Two of the youths were joyous, one was sad ;
 Sad was Enallos ; yet those two by none
 Were loved ; Enallos had already won
 Cymodameia, and the torch was near.
 By night, by day, in company, alone,
 The image of the maiden fill'd his breast
 To the heart's brim. Ah ! therefore did that heart
 So sink within him.

They have sail'd ; they reach
 Their home again. Sires, matrons, maidens, throng
 The plashing port, to watch the gather'd sail,
 And who springs first and farthest upon shore.
 Enallos came the latest from the deck,
 Swift ran the rumour what the God had said,
 And fearful were the maidens, who before
 Had urged the sailing of the youths they loved,
 That they might give their hands, and have their homes,
 And nurse their children ; and more thoughts perhaps
 Led up to these, and even ran before.
 But they persuaded easily their wooers
 To sail without them, and return again
 When they had seiz'd the virgin on the way.
 Cymodameia dreamt three nights, the three
 Before their fresh departure, that her own
 Enallos had been cast into the deep,
 And she had saved him. She alone embarkt
 Of all the maidens, and unseen by all,
 And hid herself before the break of day
 Among the cloaks and fruits piled high aboard.
 But when the noon was come, and the repast
 Was call'd for, there they found her ; and they call'd
 Enallos : when Enallos lookt upon her,
 Forebodings shook him : hopes rais'd *her*, and love
 Warm'd the clear cheek while she wiped off the spray.
 Kindly were all to her and dutiful ;
 And she slept soundly mid the leaves of fig
 And vine, and far as far could be apart.
 Now the third morn had risen, and the day
 Was dark, and gusts of wind and hail and fogs
 Perplex't them : land they saw not yet, nor knew
 Where land was lying. Sudden lightnings blazed,
 Thunder-claps rattled round them. The pale crew
 Howl'd for the victim. " Seize her, or we sink."

O maid of Pindus ! I would linger here
 To lave my eyelids at the nearest rill,
 For thou hast made me weep, as oft thou hast,
 Where thou and I, apart from living men,
 And two or three crags higher, sate and sang.
 Ah ! must I, seeing ill my way, proceed ?
 And thy voice too, Cymodameia ! thine
 Comes back upon me, helpless as thyself
 In this extremity. Sad words ! sad words !
 " O save me ! save ! Let me not die so young
 Loving thee so ! let me not cease to see thee ?"
 Thus prayed Cymodameia.

Thus prayed he.
 " O God ! who givest light to all the world,
 Take not from me what makes that light most blessed !
 Grant me, if 'tis forbidden me to save
 This hapless helpless sea-devoted maid,
 To share with her (and bring no curses up
 From outraged Neptune) her appointed fate !"
 They wrung her from his knee ; they hurl'd her down
 (Clinging in vain at the hard slippery pich)
 Into the whitening wave. But her long hair
 Scarcely had risen up again before
 Another plunge was heard, another form
 Clove the straight line of bubbling foam, direct
 As ringdove after ringdove. Groans from all
 Burst, for the roaring sea ingulph't them both.
 Onward the vessel flew ; the skies again
 Shone bright, and thunder roll'd along, not wroth,
 But gently murmuring to the white-wing'd sails.
 Lemnos at close of evening was in sight.
 The shore was won ; the fields markt out ; and roofs
 Collected the dun wings that seek house-fare ;
 And presently the ruddy-bosom'd guest
 Of winter, knew the doors : then infant cries
 Were heard within ; and lastly tottering steps
 Pattered along the image-stationed hall.
 Ay, three full years had come and gone again,
 And often, when the flame on windy nights
 Suddenly flicker'd from the mountain-ash
 Piled high, men pusht almost from under them
 The bench on which they talkt about the dead.
 Meanwhile beneficent Apollo saw
 With his bright eyes into the sea's calm depth,
 And there he saw Enallos, there he saw
 Cymodameia. Gravely-gladsome light

Environed them with its eternal green,
 And many nymphs sate round ; one blew aloud
 The spiral shell ; one drew bright chords across
 Shell more expansive ; tenderly a third
 With cowering lip hung o'er the flute, and stopt
 At will its dulcet sob, or waked to joy ;
 A fourth took up the lyre and pinch'd the strings,
 Invisible by trembling : many rais'd
 Clear voices. Thus they spent their happy hours.
 I know them all ; but all with eyes downcast,
 Conscious of loving, have entreated me
 I would not utter now their names above.
 Behold, among these natives of the sea
 There stands but one young man : how fair ! how fond !
 Ah ! were he fond to *them* ! It may not be !
 Yet did they tend him morn and eve ; by night
 They also watcht his slumbers : then they heard
 His sighs, nor his alone ; for there were two
 To whom the watch was hateful. In despair
 Upward he rais'd his arms, and thus he prayed,
 " O Phœbus ! on the higher world alone
 Showerest thou all thy blessings ? Great indeed
 Hath been thy favour to me, great to her ;
 But she pines inly, and calls beautiful
 More than herself the Nymphs she sees around,
 And asks me ' Are they not more beautiful ? '
 Be all more beautiful, be all more blest,
 But not with me ! Release her from the sight ;
 Restore her to a happier home, and dry
 With thy pure beams, above, her bitter tears ! "

She saw him in the action of his prayer,
 Troubled, and ran to soothe him. From the ground,
 Ere she had claspt his neck, her feet were borne.
 He caught her robe ; and its white radiance rose
 Rapidly, all day long, through the green sea.
 Enallos loost not from that robe his grasp,
 But spann'd one ancle too. The swift ascent
 Had stunn'd them into slumber, sweet, serene,
 Invigorating her, nor letting loose
 The lover's arm below ; albeit at last
 It closed those eyes intensely fixt thereon,
 And still as fixt in dreaming. Both were cast
 Upon an island till'd by peaceful men
 And few (no port nor road accessible)
 Fruitful and green as the abode they left,
 And warm with summer, warm with love and song.

'Tis said that some whom most Apollo loves
 Have seen that island, guided by his light ;
 And others have gone near it, but a fog
 Rose up between them and the lofty rocks ;
 Yet they relate they saw it quite as well,
 And shepherd-boys and pious hinds believe.

PAN AND PITYS.

CEASE to complain of what the Fates decree,
 Whether shall Death have carried off or (worse)
 Another, thy heart's treasure : bitter Styx
 Hath overflowed the dales of Arcady,
 And Cares have risen to the realms above.
 By Pan and Boreas was a Dryad wooed,
 Pitys her name, her haunt the grove and wild :
 Boreas she fled from, upon Pan she gazed
 With a sly fondness, yet accusing him
 Of fickle mind ; and this was her reproof.
 " Ah why do men, or Gods who ought to see
 More clearly, think that bonds will bind for ever !
 Often have stormy seas borne safely home
 A ship to perish in its port at last ;
 Even they themselves, in other things unchanged,
 Are mutable in love ; even he who rules
 Olympus hath been lighter than his clouds.
 Alas ! uncertain is the lover race,
 All of it ; worst are they who sing the best,
 And thou, Pan, worse than all.

By what deceit
 Beguiledst thou the Goddess of the night ?
 O wary shepherd of the snow-white flock !
 Ay, thy reeds crackled with thy scorching flames
 And burst with sobs and groans . . the snow-white flock
 Was safe, the love-sick swain kept sharp look there.
 Wonderest thou such report should reach my ear ?
 And widenest thou thine eyes, half-ready now
 To swear it all away, and to conceal
 The fountain of Selinos. So ! thou knowest
 Nothing about that shallow brook, those herbs
 It waves in running, nothing of the stones
 Smooth as the pavement of a temple-floor,

And how the headstrong leader of the flock
 Broke loose from thy left-hand, and in pursuit
 How falledst thou, and how thy knee was bound
 With ivy lest white hairs betray the gash.
 Denyest thou that by thy own accord
 Cynthia should share thy flock and take her choice?
 Denyest thou damping and sprinkling o'er
 With dust, and shutting up within a cave
 Far out of sight, the better breed? the worse
 Displayed upon the bank below, well washt,
 Their puffy fleeces glittering in the sun.
 Shame! to defraud with gifts, and such as these!"

Pan, blushing thro' both ears as ne'er before,
 Cried " Who drag'd back these fables from the past?
 Juster and happier hadst thou been to scorn
 The false and fugitive. With hoarse uproar
 I heard thy Boreas bray his song uncouth,
 And oldest goats ran from it in affright.
 Thee too, beloved Pitys, then I saw
 Averse: couldst ever thou believe his speech,
 His, the most bitter foe to me and mine.
 From Cynthia never fell such hard rebuke.
 Different from thee, she pities them who mourn;
 Whether beneath straw roof or lofty tower,
 She sits by the bedside and silently
 Watches, and soothes the wakeful till they sleep.
 I wooed not Cynthia; me she wooed: not all
 Please her; she hates the rude, she cheers the gay,
 She shrouds her face when Boreas ventures near.
 Above all other birds the nightingale
 She loves; she loves the poplar of the Po
 Trembling and whispering; she descends among
 The boxtrees on Cytoros; night by night
 You find her at the olive: it is she
 Who makes the berries of the mountain-ash
 Bright at her touch: the glassy founts, the fanes
 Hoary with age, the sea when Hesper comes
 To Tethys, and when liquid voices rise
 Above the shore . . . but Boreas . . . no, not she."
 Then Pitys, with a smile.

" Ha! what a voice!

My lover Boreas could not roar his name
 More harshly. Come now, cunning lightfoot! say
 How was it thou couldst take the Goddess in,
 And with a charge so moderate on thy fold?"

" Again, O Pitys, wouldst thou torture me?"

Gifts not as lover but as loved I gave ;
 I gave her what she askt : had she askt more
 I would have given it ; 'twas but half the flock :
 Therefore 'twas separated in two parts ;
 The fatter one, of bolder brow, shone out
 In whiteness, but its wool was like goat-hair,
 And loud its bleating for more plenteous grass ;
 Strong too its smell : my Goddess heeded not
 The smell or bleat, but took the weightier fleece.
 Why shakest thou thy head, incredulous ?
 Why should I urge the truth on unbelief ?
 Or why so fondly sue to scorn and hate ?
 Pitys ! a time there was when I was heard
 With one long smile, and when the softest hand
 Stroked down unconsciously the lynx-skin gift
 Of Bacchus on my lap, and blushes rose
 If somewhat, by some chance, it was removed.
 In silence or in speech I then could please,
 I then at times could turn my face aside,
 Forgetting that my awkward hand was placed .
 Just where thy knees were bending for a seat :
 Then could I at another hour look up
 At the sun's parting ray, and draw the breath
 Of fresher herbs, while clouds took living forms
 Throwing their meshes o'er the azure deep,
 And while thy gaze was on the flight of crows
 Hoarse overhead, winging their beaten way
 At regular and wonted intervals.
 Then, never doubting my sworn love, anew
 Thou badest me swear it : pleasure lay secure
 On its full golden sheaf.

Now, alas, now
 What comfort brings me on the barren shore
 Pale oleaster, or gay citisus
 That hides the cavern, or pellucid vein
 Of wandering vine, or broom that once betray'd
 The weak twin fawns ! how could I join the glee
 Of babbling brook, or bear the lull of grove,
 Or mind the dazzling vapour from the grass,
 Unless my Pitys told me, and took up
 The faltering reed or interrupted song ?"
 Thus he, enclosing with his arm hirsute
 Her neck, and stroking slow her auburn hair.
 " Up with the pipe," said she, " O Pan ! and since
 It seems so pleasant to recall old times,
 Run over those we both enjoy'd alike,

And I will sing of Boreas, whom I hate,
 He boasts of oaks uprooted by his blast,
 Of heaven itself his hailstones have disturb'd,
 Of thy peculiar heritage afire,
 And how thy loftiest woods bow'd down beneath
 His furious pennons black with bale and dread.
 He boasts of ships submerged, and waves up-piled
 High as Olympus, and the trident torn
 From Jove's own brother: worst of all, he boasts
 How often he deluded with his voice,
 Under the rocks of Ismaros, that true
 And hapless lover when his eyes sought sleep,
 And made his wandering mind believe the sound
 Rose from the Manes at his wife recall'd.
 His pleasure is to drive from lids fresh-closed
 Fond dreams away, and draw false forms about,
 And where he finds one terror to bring more.
 Can such a lover ever be beloved?"

Boreas heard all: he stood upon the cliff
 Before, now crept he into the near brake;
 Rage seiz'd him; swinging a huge rock around
 And, shaking with one stamp the mountain-head,
 Hurl'd it . . . and cried

“Is Boreas so contemn'd?"

It smote the Dryad, sprinkling with her blood
 The tree they sat beneath: there faithful Pan
 Mused often, often call'd aloud the name
 Of Pitys, and wiped off tear after tear
 From the hoarse pipe, then threw it wildly by,
 And never from that day wore other wreath
 Than off the pine-tree darkened with her gore.

CUPID AND PAN.

CUPID one day caught Pan asleep, outstretcht:
 He snatcht the goatskin hung about his loins,
 And now and then pluckt at a cross-grain'd hair
 Bent inward: yet the God, immovable,
 Blew heavy slumbers from his ruddy breast,
 Feeling as any corktree's bark might feel.
 Behind his neck was laid his favourite pipe,
 But this with furtive touch the boy withdrew,

Not quite insensibly, for one sharp ear
Quivered a little.

Cupid now waxt wroth,
Exclaiming, "Zeus above! was ever God
So dull as this? even thy own wife would fail
To rouse him."

Then he clapt the sevenfold reeds
To his own rosy lip and blew them shrill.
Both ears were now rais'd up, and up sprang he,
The God of Arcady, and shook the ground;
But high above it sprang the lighter God,
Laughing his threats to scorn.

"Down with that bow,
Wicked young wretch! down with those arrows!" cried
The indignant eld, "then see what thou canst do."

"What I can do, Pan, thou shalt also see."
Thus spake he; and the bow leapt from the sod
With golden ring, and the young herbs embraced
The quiver.

"What! contend with thee! 'twere shame . . .
"Scoff on," said Cupid; "when thy wrath subsides,
Even to be vanquisht will excite no blush.
Come, shamefaced! strike away; thy foe awaits."
The blusterer roll'd his yellow eyes, then caught
(As 'twere a bird he caught at, a rare bird
Whose pretty plumage he would grieve to hurt)
At the slim boy who taunted him too long.
'Tis said the colour now first left the face
Of the cow'd child; as when amid a game
Of quoit or hoop suddenly falls the snow,
And that he trembled, fain almost to fly.

"Go, child!" said the grave Arcad: "learn to fear
Thy elders; and from far: check yet awhile
Ferocious beauty. Thou, who challengest
The peaceful, hast seen scarcely thrice-five years.
Off! or beware a touch of willow-twig."

Cupid, ashamed and angered, springing up,
Struck where the goatskin covered ill the breast;
Swift as an eagle or the bolt he bears
The Arcad, quick of sight, perceived the aim
And caught the hand, which burnt like purest fire
Upon the altar: Pan drew back his own
Extended palm, and blew from rounder cheek
A long cold whiff, and then again advanced,
Trembling to intertwine his hairy shank
With that soft thigh and trip him up, nor ceast

To press the yielding marble from above.
 He grew less anxious to conclude the fight
 Or win it ; but false glory urged him on.
 Cupid, now faint and desperate, seiz'd one horn ;
 Pan swung him up aloft ; but artifice
 Fail'd not the boy ; nay, where the Arcad cried
Conquered at last, and ran both hands about
 The dainty limbs, pluckt out from the left wing
 Its stiffest feather, and smote both his eyes.
 Then loud the rivers and the lakes afar
 Resounded, and the valleys and the groves ;
 Then Ladon with a start and shudder broke
 That marsh which had for ages crost his course ;
 Alpheios and Spercheios heard the shout
 Of Mænalos ; Cyllenè, Pholoë,
 Parthenos, Tegea, and Lycaios, call'd
 Responsively, nor knew they yet the cause.
 'Tis said the winged steed sprang from the highths
 Of his Parnassus and ran down amid
 The murky marshes, his proud spirit gone,
 And there abided he, nor once drave back
 Castalia's ripples with his neigh and mane.
 " Hail, conqueror ! " Cupid cried.

In lower tone

The Arcad,

" Never shall my eyes behold
 My woodland realms ! never the ice afloat
 Under the Zephyrs, and whirl'd round and round,
 Or the foam sparkling dasht upon the ford ;
 Never the pebbles black and white below,
 Smoothen'd and rounded by assiduous plash,
 Nor silvery cloud expanded overhead,
 Nor Hesper, come to listen to my song.
 Ah ! for the blind there is one spot alone
 Upon the earth, and there alone stand I.
 I did not challenge ; should I sue ? suffice
 Thy victory ! "

He held forth his hand, nor knew
 Whether he held it straight before the boy,
 While from both cheeks fell tears : compassionate
 Was Cupid.

" Soon " said he " a remedy
 Shall be provided."

Soon were gathered flowers,
 Nor long ere platted.

" I bestow them all "

Said he "on one condition: that thou wear
 These, and these only, till I take them off."
 The first was amaranth; too brittle that,
 It broke ere well applied; then roses white,
 White were all roses in these early days,
 Narcissus, violet, open-hearted lily,
 And smaller ones, no higher than the grass,
 Slender and drooping they, yet fresh and fair;
 A spray of myrtle held together these.
 But when they toucht his eye he stampt and yell'd
 And laid wipe-open his sharp teeth until
 The quivering nostril felt the upper lip.
 Soon slept he better mid the strawberries,
 And more and more he thought of Hamadryads,
 Recalling all their names, and linking them
 In easy verse, and fancying it was time
 To take a little care of form and face:
 The goatskin for the fawnskin he exchanged
 And stroked complacently the smoother pelt,
 And trim'd and drew the ivy round his waist . . .
 It must not be too full . . . too scant were worse . . .
 Lastly he doft the bandage from the brow.
 Then was renew'd the series of his woes,
 And forced was he to implore again the help
 Of his proud conqueror, at the Paphian fane.
 There found he Venus in the porch itself.
 "So! 'twas thy pleasure" said she "to remove
 The flowers we gave thee. No slight chastisement
 For this! It was thy duty and thy vow
 To wear them till the hands that laid them on
 Releas't thee from them.

Goat-foot! he who scorns
 Our gifts, scorns never with impunity:
 Round that horn'd brow, to ake again ere long,
 A wreath less soft and fragrant shalt thou wear."

EUROPA AND HER MOTHER.

Mother. Daughter! why roamest thou again so late
 Along the damp and solitary shore?

Europa. I know not. I am tired of distaf, woof,
 Everything.

Mother. Yet thou culledst flowers all morn,
And idledst in the woods, mocking shrill birds,
Or clapping hands at limping hares, who stamp
Angrily, and scour'd off.

Europa. I am grown tired
Of hares and birds! O mother! had you seen
That lovely creature! It was not a cow,
And, if it was an ox,* it was unlike
My father's oxen with the hair rubb'd off
Their necks.

Mother. A cow it was.

Europa. Cow it might be . . .
And yet . . . and yet . . . I saw no calf, no font
Of milk: I wish I had; how pleasant 'twere
To draw it and to drink!

Mother. Europa! child!
Have we no maiden for such offices?
No whistling boy? King's daughters may cull flowers,
To place them on the altar of the Gods
And wear them at their festivals. Who knows
But some of these very Gods may deign
To woo thee? maidens they have wooed less fair.

Europa. The Gods are very gracious: some of them
Not very constant.

Mother. Hush!

Europa. Nay, Zeus himself
Hath wanderèd, and deluded more than one.

Mother. Fables! profanest fables!

Europa. Let us hope so.
But I should be afraid of him, and run
As lapwings do when we approach the nest.

Mother. None can escape the Gods when they pursue.

Europa. They know my mind, and will not follow me.

Mother. Consider: some are stars whom they have loved,
Others, the very least of them, are flowers.

Europa. I would not be a star in winter nights,
In summer days I would not be a flower;
Flowers seldom live thro' half their time, torn off,
Twirl'd round, and indolently cast aside.
Now, mother, can you tell me what became
Of those who were no flowers, but bent their heads
As pliantly as flowers do?

Mother. They are gone
To Hades.

* Bulls are never at large in those countries; Europa could not have seen one.

Europa. And left there by Gods they loved
And were beloved by! Be not such my doom!
Cruel are men, but crueller are Gods.

Mother. Peace! peace! Some royal, some heroic, youth
May ask thy father for thy dower and thee.

Europa. I know not any such, if such there live;
Royal there may be, but heroic . . . where?
O mother! look! look! look!

Mother. Thou turnest pale;
What ails thee?

Europa. Who in all the house hath dared
To wind those garlands round that grand white brow?
So mild, so loving! Mother! let me run
And tear them off him: let me gather more
And sweeter.

Mother. Truly 'tis a noble beast.
See! he comes forward! see, he rips them off,
Himself!

Europa. He should not wear them if he would.
Stay there, thou noble creature! Woe is me!
There are but sandrose, tyme, and snapdragon
Along the shore as far as I can see.
O mother! help me on his back; he licks
My foot. Ah! what sweet breath! Now on his side
He lies on purpose for it. Help me up.

Mother. Well, child! Indeed he is gentle. Gods above!
He takes the water! Hold him tight, Europa!
'Tis well that thou canst swim.

Leap off, mad girl!
She laughs! He lows so loud she hears not me . . .
But she looks sadder, or my sight is dim . . .
Against his nostril fondly hangs her hand
While his eye glistens over it, fondly too.
It will be night, dark night, ere she returns.
And that new scarf! the spray will ruin it!

CHRYSAOR.

COME, I beseech ye, Muses! who, retired
Deep in the shady glens by Helicon,
Yet know the realms of Ocean, know the laws
Of his wide empire, and throughout his court

Know every Nymph, and call them each by name ;
 Who from your sacred mountain see afar
 O'er earth and heaven, and hear and memorise
 The crimes of men and counsels of the Gods ;
 Sing of those crimes and of those counsels, sing
 Of Gades sever'd from the fruitful main,
 And what befell, and from what mighty hand,
 Chrysaor, wielder of the golden sword.
 'Twas when the high Olympus shook with fear,
 Lest all his temples, all his groves, be crusht
 By Pelion piled on Ossa : but the sire
 Of mortals and immortals waved his arm
 Around, and all below was wild dismay :
 Again ; 'twas agony : again ; 'twas peace.
 Chrysaor still in Gades tarrying,
 Hurl'd into ether, tinging, as it flew,
 With sudden fire the clouds round Saturn's throne,
 No pine surrendered by retreating Pan,
 Nor ash, nor poplar pale : but swoln with pride
 Stood towering from the citadel ; his spear
 One hand was rested on, and one with rage
 Shut hard, and firmly fixt against his side ;
 His frowning visage, flusht with insolence,
 Rais'd up oblique to heaven. " O thou," he cried,
 " Whom nations kneel to, not whom nations know,
 Hear me, and answer, if indeed thou canst,
 The last appeal I deign thee or allow.
 Tell me, and quickly, why should I adore,
 Adored myself by millions ? why invoke,
 Invoked with all thy attributes ? Men wrong
 By their prostrations, prayers, and sacrifice,
 Either the Gods, their rulers, or themselves :
 But flame and thunder fright them from the Gods ;
Themselves they can not, dare not, they are ours ;
Us, dare they, can they, *us* ? But triumph, Jove !
 Man for one moment hath engaged his lord,
 Henceforth let merchants value him, not kings.
 No ! lower thy sceptre, and hear Atrobal,
 And judge aright to whom men sacrifice.
 ' My children,' said the sage and pious priest,
 ' Mark there the altar ! though the fumes aspire
 Twelve cubits ere a nostril they regale,
 'Tis myrrh for Titans, 'tis but air for Gods.'
 Time changes, Nature changes, I am changed !
 Fronting the furious lustre of the sun,
 I yielded to his piercing swift-shot beams

Only when quite meridan, then abased
 These orbits to the ground, and there survey'd
 My shadow : strange and horrid to relate !
 My very shadow almost disappear'd !
 Restore it, or by earth and hell I swear
 With blood enough will I refascinate
 The cursed incantation : thou restore,
 And largely ; or my brethren, all combined,
 Shall rouse thee from thy lethargies, and drive
 Far from thy cloud-soft pillow, minion-prest,
 Those leering lassitudes that follow Love."

The smile of disappointment and disdain
 Sat sallow on his pausing lip half-closed ;
 But, neither headlong importunity
 Nor gibing threat of reed-propt insolence
 Let loose the blast of vengeance : heaven shone bright,
 And proud Chrysaor spurn'd the prostrate land.
 But the triumphant Thunderer, now mankind
 (Criminal mostly for enduring crimes)
 Provoked his indignation, thus besought
 His trident-sceptred brother, triton-borne.
 " O Neptune ! cease henceforward to repine.
 They are not cruel, no ; the Destinies
 Intent upon their loom, unoccupied
 With aught beyond its moody murmuring sound,
 Will neither see thee weep nor hear thee sigh :
 And wherefore weep, O Neptune, wherefore sigh !
 Ambition ? 'tis unworthy of a God,
 Unworthy of a brother ! I am Jove,
 Thou Neptune : happier in uncitied realms,
 In coral hall or grotto samphire-ceil'd,
 Amid the song of Nymphs and ring of shells
 Thou smoothest at thy will the pliant wave
 Or liftest it to heaven. I also can
 Whatever best beseems me, nor for aid
 Unless I loved thee, Neptune, would I call.
 Though absent, thou hast heard and hast beheld
 The profanation of that monstrous race,
 That race of earth-born giants ; one survives ;
 The rapid-footed Rhodan mountain-rear'd
 Beheld the rest defeated ; still remain
 Scatter'd throughout interminable fields,
 Sandy and sultry, and each hopeless path
 Choakt up with crawling briars and bristling thorns,
 The flinty trophies of their foul disgrace.
 Chrysaor, wielder of the golden sword,

Still hails as brethren men of stouter heart,
 But, wise confederate, shuns Phlegræan fields.
 No warrior he, yet who so fond of war,
 Unfeeling, scarce ferocious; flattery's dupe,
 He fancies that the Gods themselves are his;
 Impious, but most in prayer. Now re-assert
 Thy friendship, raise thy trident, strike the rock,
 Sever him from mankind." Then thus replied
 The Nymph-surrounded monarch of the main.

"Empire bemoan I not, however shared,
 Nor Fortune frail, nor stubborn Fate: accuse:
 No! mortals I bemoan! when Avarice,
 Ploughing these fruitless furrows, shall awake
 The basking Demons and the dormant Crimes,
 Horrible, strong, resistless, and transform
 Meekness to Madness, Patience to Despair.
 What is Ambition? what but Avarice?
 But Avarice in richer guise array'd,
 Stalking erect, loud-spoken, lion-mien'd,
 Her brow uncrossed by care, but deeply markt,
 And darting downward 'twixt her eyes hard-lasht
 The wrinkle of command. Could ever I
 So foul a fiend, so fondly too, caress?
 Judge me not harshly, judge me by my deeds."

Though seated then on Afric's further coast,
 Yet sudden at his voice, so long unheard,
 (For he had grieved and treasured up his grief)
 With short kind greeting meet from every side
 The Triton herds, and warm with melody
 The azure concave of their curling shells.
 Swift as an arrow, as the wind, as light,
 He glided through the deep, and now arrived,
 Lept from his pearly beryl-studded car.
 Earth trembled: the retreating tide, black-brow'd,
 Gather'd new strength, and rushing on, assail'd
 The promontory's base: but when the God
 Himself, resistless Neptune, struck one blow,
 Rent were the rocks asunder, and the sky
 Was darken'd with their fragments ere they fell.
 Lygeia vocal, Zantho yellow-hair'd,
 Spio with sparkling eyes, and Berœe
 Demure, and sweet Ione, youngest-born,
 Of mortal race, but grown divine by song.
 Had he seen playing round her placid neck
 The sunny circles, braidless and unbound,

O! who had call'd them boders of a storm!
 These, and the many sister Nereids,
 Forgetful of their lays and of their loves,
 All unsuspecting of the dread intent,
 Stop suddenly their gambols, and with shrieks
 Of terror plunge amid the closing wave;
 Yet, just above, one moment more appear
 Their darken'd tresses floating in the foam.
 Thrown prostrate on the earth, the Sacrilege
 Rais'd up his head astounded, and accurst
 The stars, the destinies, the gods; his breast
 Panted from consternation and dismay,
 And pride untoward on himself o'erthrown.
 From his distended nostrils issued gore
 At intervals, wherewith his wiry locks,
 Huge arms, and bulky bosom, shone bealimed:
 And thrice he call'd his brethren, with a voice
 More dismal than the blasts from Phlegethon
 Below, that urge along ten thousand ghosts
 Wafted loud-wailing o'er the fiery tide.
 But answer heard he none: the men of might
 Who gather'd round him formerly, the men
 Whom frozen at a frown, a smile revived,
 Were far: enormous mountains interposed,
 Nor ever had the veil-hung pine out-spread
 O'er Tethys then her wandering leafless shade:
 Nor could he longer under winter stars
 Suspend the watery journey, nor repose
 Whole nights on Ocean's billowy restless bed;
 No longer, bulging through the tempest, rose
 That bulky bosom; nor those oarlike hands,
 Trusted ere mortal's keenest ken conceived
 The bluest shore, threw back opposing tides.
 Shrunken mid brutal hair his violent veins
 Subsided, yet were hideous to behold
 As dragons panting in the noontide brake.
 At last, absorbing deep the breath of heaven,
 And stifling all within his deadly grasp,
 Struggling and tearing up the glebe to turn,
 And from a throat that, as it throbb'd and rose,
 Seem'd shaking ponderous links of dusky iron,
 Uttering one anguish-forced indignant groan,
 Fired with infernal rage, the spirit flew.
 Nations of fair Hesperia! lo, o'erthrown
 Your peace-embracing war-inciting king!
 Ah! thrice twelve years and longer ye endured,

Without one effort to rise higher, one hope
That heaven would wing the secret shaft aright,
The abomination: hence 'twas Jove's command
That many hundred, many thousand more,
Freed from one despot, yet from one unfreed,
Ye crouch unblest at Superstition's feet.
Her hath he sent among ye; her the pest
Of men below and curse of Gods above:
Hers are the last, worst tortures they inflict
On all who bend to any king but them.
Born of Sicanus in the vast abyss
Where never light descended, she survived
Her parent; he omnipotence defied,
But thunderstruck fell headlong from the clouds;
She, though the radiant ether overpower'd
Her eyes, accusom'd to the gloom of night,
And quencht their lurid orbs, Religion's helm
Assuming, vibrated her Stygian torch,
Till thou, Astræa! though behind the sire's
Broad egis, trembledst on thy heavenly throne.
We are what suns and winds and waters make us;
The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills
Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.
But where the land is dim from tyranny,
There tiny pleasures occupy the place
Of glories and of duties; as the feet
Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.
Then Justice, call'd the Eternal One above,
Is more inconstant than the buoyant form
That burst into existence from the froth
Of ever-varying ocean: what is best
Then becomes worst; what loveliest, most deformed.
The heart is hardest in the softest climes,
The passions flourish, the affections die.
O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,
That fillest all the space between the seas,
Spreading from Venice's deserted courts
To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole,
What lifts thee up? what shakes thee? 'tis the breath
Of God. Awake, ye nations! spring to life!
Let the last work of his right hand appear
Fresh with his image, Man. Thou recreant slave
That sittest afar off and helpest not,
O thou degenerate Albion! with what shame
Do I survey thee, pushing forth the sponge

At thy spear's length, in mockery at the thirst
 Of holy Freedom in his agony,
 And prompt and keen to pierce the wounded side !
 Must Italy then wholly rot away
 Amid her slime, before she germinate
 Into fresh vigour, into form again ?
 What thunder bursts upon mine ear ! some isle
 Hath surely risen from the gulphs profound,
 Eager to suck the sunshine from the breast
 Of beauteous Nature, and to catch the gale
 From golden Hermus and Melena's brow.
 A greater thing than isle, than continent,
 Than earth itself, than ocean circling earth,
 Hath risen there ; regenerate Man hath risen.
 Generous old bard of Chios ! not that Jove
 Deprived thee in thy latter days of sight
 Would I complain, but that no higher theme
 Than a disdainful youth, a lawless king,
 A pestilence, a pyre, awoke thy song,
 When on the Chian coast, one javelin's throw
 From where thy tombstone, where thy cradle stood,
 Twice twenty self-devoted Greeks assail'd
 The naval host of Asia, at one blow
 Scattered it into air . . . and Greece was free . . .
 And ere these glories beam'd, thy day had closed.
 Let all that Elis ever saw, give way,
 All that Olympian Jove e'er smiled upon :
 The Marathonian columns never told
 A tale more glorious, never Salamis,
 Nor, faithful in the centre of the false,
 Platea, nor Anthela, from whose mount
 Benignant Ceres wards the blessed Laws,
 And sees the Amphictyon dip his weary foot
 In the warm streamlet of the strait below.*
 Goddess ! altho' thy brow was never rear'd
 Among the powers that guarded or assail'd
 Perfidious Ilium, parricidal Thebes,
 Or other walls whose war-belt e'er inclosed
 Man's congregated crimes and vengeful pain,
 Yet hast thou toucht the extremes of grief and joy ;
 Grief upon Enna's mead and Hell's ascent,
 A solitary mother ; joy beyond,
 Far beyond, that thy woe, in this thy fane :
 The tears were human, but the bliss divine.

* The Amphictyons met annually in the temple of Ceres near Anthela.

I, in the land of strangers, and deprest
With sad and certain presage for my own,
Exult at hope's fresh dayspring, tho' afar,
There where my youth was not unexercised
By chiefs in willing war and faithful song:
Shades as they were, they were not empty shades,
Whose bodies haunt our world and blear our sun,
Obstruction worse than swamp and shapeless sands.
Peace, praise, eternal gladness, to the souls
That, rising from the seas into the heavens,
Have ransom'd first their country with their blood!
O thou immortal Spartan! at whose name
The marble table sounds beneath my palms,
Leonidas! even thou wilt not disdain
To mingle names august as these with thine;
Nor thou, twin-star of glory, thou whose rays
Stream'd over Corinth on the double sea,
Achaian and Saronic; whom the sons
Of Syracuse, when Death removed thy light,
Wept more than slavery ever made them weep,
But shed (if gratitude is sweet) sweet tears . . .
The hand that then pour'd ashes o'er their heads
Was loosen'd from its desperate chain by thee.
What now can press mankind into one mass,
For Tyranny to tread the more secure?
From gold alone is drawn the guilty wire
That Adulation trills: she mocks the tone
Of Duty, Courage, Virtue, Piety,
And under her sits Hope. O how unlike
That graceful form in azure vest array'd,
With brow serene, and eyes on heaven alone
In patience fixt, in fondness unobscured!
What monsters coil beneath the spreading tree
Of Despotism! what wastes extend around!
What poison floats upon the distant breeze!
But who are those that cull and deal its fruit?
Creatures that shun the light and fear the shade,
Bloated and fierce, Sleep's mien and Famine's cry.
Rise up again, rise in thy dignity,
Dejected Man! and scare this brood away.

LYSANDER, ALCANOR, AND PHANÖE.

Lysander. Art thou grown hoarse by sitting in the sun
Of early spring, when winds come down adrift
To punish them they find asleep at noon?

Alcanor. Hoarse I am not, but I am tired of song,
Therefore do I retire, where, without pipe,
The goat-foot God brought all the nymphs to sit
Half-way up Mænalos. If she I love
Will follow me, I swear to thee by him,
Bitter to those who slight him or forswear,
Thou shalt hear something sweet, do thou but stay.

Lysander. Lysander well can stay, do thou but sing.

Alcanor. But not unless a Nymph or Nymph-like maid
Will listen.

Lysander. Here comes Phanöe. Thou art pale.
Sing: Phanöe! bid him sing.

Phanöe. By Artemis!

I bade him never more repeat my name,
And if he disobeys me . . .

Lysander. Hush! 'twere ill
To call down vengeance upon those who love:
And he hath sworn by Pan that he will sing
If thou wilt follow him up Mænalos.

Phanöe. He may snatch off my slipper while I kneel
To Pan, upon the stone so worn aslant
That it is difficult to kneel upon
Without my leaving half a slipper loose.
Little cares he for Pan: he scarcely fears
That other, powerfuller and terribler,
To whom more crowns are offered than to Zeus,
Or any God beside, and oftener changed.
In spring we garland him with pointed flowers,
Anemone and crocus and jonquil,
And tender hyacinth in clustering curls;
Then with sweet-breathing mountain strawberry;
Then pear and apple blossom, promising
(If he is good) to bring the fruit full-ripe,
Hanging it round about his brow, his nose,
Down even to his lips. When autumn comes,
His russet vine-wreath crackles under grapes:
Some trim his neck with barley, wheat, and oat;
Some twine his naked waist with them: and last
His reverend head is seen and worshipt through
Stiff narrow olive-leaves, that last till spring.

Say, ought I not to fear so wild a boy,
 Who fears not even *him* ! but once has tried
 By force to make me pat him, after prayers ?
 How fierce then lookt the God ! and from above
 How the club reddened, as athirst for blood !
 Yet, fearing and suspecting the audacious,
 Up Mænalos I must, for there my herd
 Is browsing on the thorn and citisus
 At random.

Lysander. He hath not endured thy frown,
 But hurries off.

Phanöe. And let him.

Lysander. Captious Pan
 On one or other may look evil-eyed.

Phanöe. I mind my Goddess, let him mind his God.

Away she went, and as she went she sang.
 Brief cries were heard ere long, faint and more faint.
 Pan ! was it thou ? was it thou, Artemis ?
 Frolicksome kids and hard goats glassy-eyed
 Alone could tell the story, had they speech.
 The maiden came not back : but, after rites
 Due to the goat-foot God, the pious youth
 Piped shrilly forth and shook off all his woe.

LACON AND DORA.

Dora (wakening him). Feedest thou upon poppies ? drowsy
 drone !

Lacon. Haply my breathing was a little hard,
 Hard it is always when I think of thee.

Dora. Do idle shepherds snort like porpuses ?
 I know what such hard breathing means with men ;
 We never practise it.

Lacon. Us men ye make
 Practise it often.

Dora. Why not keep awake ?

Lacon. Too long awake ye keep us.

Dora. When you dance ;
 But dance makes me sleep sounder.

Lacon. You mistake
 My meaning ?

Dora. Is there any ?

Lacon. Day and night

Of all hard breathing ye enforce the worst . .
Unheeded sighs.

Dora. Bad ! but the worst are those
That burst from nostril ; hast thou none beside ?

Lacon. I could breathe softer in a patient ear :
Sit by my side and hear the difference.

Dora. Quiet now ! wilt not let me seat myself ?

Lacon. I would but help thee : soon we both will rise
Together. They who sigh but once have learnt
Imperfect love : beginning, middle, end,
There are in all things ; we have barely come
Halfway.

Dora. O impudence ! is that halfway ?
Then when, I wonder, shall we reach the end ?

ACON AND KEPOS.

Acon. Kepos ! what brings thee from the market-place ?

Kepos. What drove me from it, rather ask.

Acon. Well, what ?

Kepos. There was a scramble round about my stall,
And two unlucky boys were fighting hard
Which of them should sweep off the fruit ; at last
They overturn'd the board : 'twas time to run.

Acon. And were the people then indifferent ?

Kepos. At first they were not ; presently they laugh
To see a split pomegranate's slippery fruit
Drop from the fingers of the foremost two,
With nothing left between them but hard rind
And deeply-dyed and ever-during stain.

Acon. Children of Hellas ! learn your lesson here,
Nor touch pomegranate in the market-place.

LEONTION, ON TERNISSA'S DEATH (EPICUROS ALSO DEPARTED).

Behold, behold me, whether thou
Art dwelling with the Shades below

Or with the Gods above :

With thee were even the Gods more blest . .

I wish I could but share thy rest

As once I shared thy love.

'Twas in this garden where I lean
 Against thy tombstone, once the scene
 Of more than mortal bliss,
 That loiter'd our Ternissa; sure
 She left me that her love was pure;
 It gave not kiss for kiss.

Faint was the blush that overspread
 Thro' loosen'd hair her dying head;
 One name she utter'd, one
 She sigh'd and wept at; so wilt thou,
 If any sorrows reach thee now . . .
 'Twas not *Leontion*.

Wert thou on earth thou wouldst not chide
 The gush of tears I could not hide
 Who ne'er hid aught from thee.
 Willing thou wentest on the way
 She went . . . and am I doom'd to stay?
 No; we soon meet, all three.

The flowers she cherisht I will tend,
 Nor gather, but above them bend
 And think they breathe her breath.
 Ah, happy flowers! ye little know
 Your youthful nurse lies close below,
 Close as in life in death.

HYMN AND OFFERING OF TERPANDER TO JUNO.

I TOUCH the soil of Samos, where the queen
 Of heaven is worshipt, and her priests ordain'd
 Accept with gracious hands the gift of poor
 And rich alike, and even frame the prayers
 Of such as can not make them as beseems.
 What priests upon the earth so bountiful?
 What land so lovely? not even Rhodes, where Spring
 Serenely smiles at Winter's languid wrath,
 And where Apollo by the will of Zeus
 Reigns the sole God.

Do thou with face benign
 O Herè! take this votive vest to-day,
 Brought by no hand impure, and well besprent

With lustral water, which the grateful fumes
 Of incense rest on, and will rest on long,
 Until they reach thee at thy dome above.
 Do thou, O Herè, lay before the throne
 Of Zeus all my petitions, all my prayers ;
 For well thou knowest 'twere audacious deed
 In me without thy intercession, queen,
 To plead before him for offence of mine,
 Or favour at the Almighty Thunderer's hands.

Stand afar off, ye unbelieving men,
 While I with reverence lay before the feet
 Of Herè this my offering, from a woof
 Which maids of Sidon laboured to intwine
 With gold and purple. Stand afar, profane,
 Who doubt if they who on Olympus dwell,
 Wear such thin raiment when they take delight
 And clap their hands to see a Cloud and Wind
 (Eurus or Boreas or Apeliotes)
 Run races on the summit in the snow.

I, happy in thy worship and thy care,
 Seek not to vary this my happiness,
 Nor would partake nor would impose a yoke.
 I know that Love and Hymen when they meet
 Are apt to quarrel ; Hymen presses hard,
 But Love with lighter wing eludes the grasp.
 I shudder when I see a saffron robe
 And torch before it. Herè ! I am weak ;
 Direct my steps, direct them to thy fane
 As now, and back again as now, alone.

SOPHRON'S HYMN TO BAKKOS.

STAND afar off, irreverent and profane,
 While I ascend the temple of a God
 Miraculously born ; a woman's child,
 The nurseling of no woman, but enwrapt
 In the soft swatheing of a father's thigh.

Hail, earthborn son of Semele and Zeus !
 Earthborn yet more, and in more lands, adored
 Than Zeus himself. Grant me the power to sing
 Thy praise, thy glorious conquests to rehearse
 Beyond the Ganges and Gangetic isles
 Numberless, where fierce tigers didst thou quell,

Stripping their skins from off them ere half-dead,
 And whirling round thy neck their tawny legs,
 And round thy shoulders to thy loins the length
 Of their rich spoils : then first did Greece behold
 Fangs such as never since hath Calydon
 Yielded, when Meleager was avenged.

Better than victories are benefits ;
 And these are thine too ; greater none the Gods
 Bestow on mortal. By thy hand the chain
 Is loosened on the captive, and holds down
 The neck of kings, who toss and toss in vain
 And change the pillow, right and left, and start,
 Dreaming they hear the heavy sceptre drop.

Who praises now Lykourgos ? who but shrinks
 At that accursed name ? 'twas he that spurn'd
 Thy precious gift, nor spared the graceful curl
 Of lucid tendril, nor pubescent down,
 Nor fragrant bloom that waits the later spring.

We hear what nectar is, we hear whose hand
 Presents it in her golden cup to Zeus,
 Tasting it at his nod and smile ; then he
 Drinks from the margin which her lips had toucht ;
 The nectar is not nectar until then :
 Thou knowest, Dionysos, thou alone,
 Whether it came from his own native Crete,
 Or from his daughter's Cypros ; both produce
 Beverage which Hebe need not blush to bear.

Is there in city, hamlet, woodland, croft,
 A festival without thy genial gifts,
 Thy presence, tho' unseen ? Is there a birth
 Of infant but thou gladdenest more the sire,
 And the sire's friends, who sing thy praise aloud ?

Thou knowest I was ever temperate
 And worshipt thee in purity ; thou knowest
 I loved the Nymphs because they fondled thee
 And carried thee an infant in their arms.
 Modest as these am I ; therefore unblamed
 I may invoke thee in the midst of them.
 One there is, Dionysos, at whose song
 Sorrow hath often fled from me ; do thou
 Incline thine ear, and haply she may sing,
 Altho' her songs were never framed for thee.

Hail, Dionysos, once again, and bless
 This hospitable city ; bless the sires
 Of her brave sons, and them ! long may they raise
 The ancestral cup, and pass it friend to friend !

DRIMACOS.

In Crete reign'd Zeus and Minos ; and there sprang
 From rocky Chios (but more years between)
 Homer. Ah ! who near Homer's side shall stand ?
 A slave, a slave shall stand near Homer's side.
 Come from dark ages forth, come, Drimacos !
 O gems of Ocean, shining here and there
 Upon his vest of ever-changeful green,
 Richer are ye than wide-spread continents,
 Richer in thoughtful men and glorious deeds.
 Drimacos was a slave ; but Liberty
 By him from Slavery sprang, as day from night.
 Intolerable servitude o'erran
 The isle of Chios. They whose sires had heard
 The blind man, and the muse who sat beside,
 Constant, as was the daughter to the king
 Of Thebes, and comforting his sunless way,
 Yea, even these bore stones within their breasts,
 Buying by land or capturing by sea,
 And torturing limbs fashioned like their own,
 Limbs like the Gods' they all fell down before.
 But Zeus had from Olympus lookt oblique,
 Then breath'd into the breasts of suffering slaves.
 Heroic courage and heroic strength,
 And wisdom for their guidance and support.
 Drimacos he appointed to coerce
 The pride of the enslaver, and to free
 All those who laboured and were heavy-laden
 With griefs, not even by the avenging Gods
 Inflicted, wrongs which men alone inflict
 On others, when their vices have scoopt out
 A yoke far more opprobrious for themselves.
 From field to field the clang of arms was heard ;
 Fires from the rocks and the hill-tops by night
 Collected all the valiant, all the young,
 Female and male, stripling and suckling babe,
 By mother (then most fond) not left behind.
 But many were o'ertaken ; many dropt
 Faint by the road ; thirst, hunger, terror, seiz'd
 Separate their prey. Among the fugitives,
 In the most crowded and the narrowest path
 That led into the thickets on the hill,
 Was Aymonè with her infant boy,

Eiarinos. She pray'd the Gods, nor pray'd
 Inaudible, although her voice had fail'd.
 On Drimacos she call'd by name; he heard
 The voice; he turn'd his head, and cried aloud:
 "Comrades! take up yon infant from the arms
 That sink with it; and help the mother on."
 Far in advance was he; all urged amain;
 All minded their own household, nor obey'd.
 But he rusht back amid them till he reacht
 The mother, who had fallen under-foot,
 Trampled, but not relinquishing her hold.
 Scarcely was space to stoop in, yet he stoopt
 And rais'd what feebly wail'd among men's legs,
 And placed it on his head, that the fresh air
 Might solace it: soon it began to play,
 To pat the hair of some, of some the eyes,
 Unconscious that its mother's soul had fled.
 The dust rose lower, for the sultry day
 Was closing, and above shone Hesperus
 Alone. On mossy banks within the brake
 The men threw down their weapons snatcht in haste,
 Impenetrable woods received their flight,
 And shelter'd and conceal'd them from pursuit.
 There many years they dwelt; nor only there,
 But also in the plains and in the towns
 Fought they, and overthrew the wealthier race,
 And drove their cattle off and reapt their grain.
 Drimacos, strong in justice, strong in arms,
 Prompt, vigilant, was everywhere obey'd.
 He proffer'd the proud Chiots, half-subdued,
 Repression of invaders, in return
 For their repression of invaders too,
 And corn and wine and oil enough for all,
 And horned victims to avenger Zeus.
 But plenteousness and sloth relaxt his hold
 Upon a few, men yearning to partake
 The vices of a city: murmurs rose
 And reacht the ear of Drimacos, and reacht
 The wealthy towns and their impatient lords.
 Rewards were offered for the leader's head,
 And askt perhaps ere offered. When he found
 Ingratitude so nigh and so alert,
 He listened calmly to the chiefs around,
 His firm defenders; then replied:
 "My friends!
 Already in the days of youth ye wastest

Over the common-weal, but now your eyes
 And mine too want repose. Fear not for me,
 But guard yourselves. The Gods who placed me here
 Call *me* away, not you."

They heard, and went,
 Sorrowing. Then call'd he unto him the youth
 Eiarinos, who two whole years had fought
 Beside him, and fought well.

"Eiarinos!
 I may have saved thy life ('tis said I did)
 In infancy: it now behoves me, boy,
 To give thee substance such as parents give.
 Alas! 'tis wanting: nought is in the house
 Save arms, as thou well knowest; but those men
 Who left me now, had talkt with thee before,
 And there are marks along thy cheek which tears
 Leave upon maiden's cheeks, not upon men's.

Eiarinos spake not, but threw his arms
 Around his guardian's neck and shook with grief.
 "Thou shalt not be quite destitute, my son!"
 Said he, "Thou knowest what reward awaits
 Him who shall bring my head within the town.
 Here! strike! let never traitor grasp the gold."
 Forward he held the hilt and lowered his brow.
 "Bequeatest thou to parricidal hand,
 O father! that accursed gold?" cried he,
 And ran against the portal, blind with tears.
 But the calm man now caught his arm, and said,
 "Delay may bring on both what comes for one.
 Inevitable is my death: at least
 Promise me this one thing, Eiarinos,
 And I release thee: swear that, when I die,
 Thou wilt, against all adversaries, bear
 My head to those who seek it, pledge of peace."
 Calmer, but sobbing deep, the youth replied,
 "When Zeus the liberator shall appoint
 The pastor of the people to depart,
 His will be done! if such be his and thine."
 He lowered his eyes in reverence to the earth;
 And Drimacos then smote into his breast
 The unaccepted sword. The pious youth
 Fell overpowered with anguish, nor arose
 Until the elders, who had gone, return'd.
 They comforted the orphan, and implored
 He would perform the duty thus enjoined.
 Nor Muse, nor Memory her mother, knows

The sequel : but upon the highest peak
Of Chios is an altar of square stone
Roughened by time, and some believe they trace
In ancient letters, cubit-long, the words
Drimacos and *Eiarinos* and *Zeus*.

PINDAR AND HIERO.

Hiero. Pindar! no few are there among my guests
Who lift up eyebrows archt and rounded eyes
To hear thee talk as they do. Poets grin
And whisper,

*He is one of us, not more,
Tho' higher in . . . I think they also add
Our foolish king's esteem.*

Pindar. We do not feed
On race-horse flesh, nor drive the chariot-wheels
Upon the table. Even in verse I sing
Not always dithyrambics. I may lift
Weak mortal over an admiring crowd,
And I may hear and heed not their applause,
A part whereof is given to him who fed
The steeds, a part to him who drove, a part
At last to me.

Hiero. My friend! the steeds are gone,
The charrioteers will follow : Death pursues
And overtakes the fleetest of them all :
He may pant on until his ribs are crackt,
He never shall reach thee. Believe one word
A king hath spoken . . . Ages shall sweep off
All lighter things, but leave thy name behind.

Pindar. I was amused at hearing the discourse
Of our wise judges, when their maws were fill'd,
About some poets of the present day.

Hiero. I did not hear it. I would not surcharge
Thy memory, 'twere unfriendly ; but perchance
A tittle of the tattle may adhere
Still to thy memory, as on amber hairs
That some loose wench hath combed into the street :
If so, pray let me have it.

Pindar. An old friend
Of mine had represented the grave sire

Of poets, in the isle of Ithaca,
 Conversing with Laertes.

Hiero. He was wrong.
 Homer lived some time after him.

Pindar. Who knows?
 Howbeit, the worst complaint was that a king
 Spoke of stale bread, and offered it his guest.

Hiero. Ithaca is not Sicily: the rocks
 Of that poor island bear no crops of wheat;
 Laertes might not every day have spared
 The scanty brushwood for the oaten cake.
 Wine, I will wager, your old friend hath jogg'd
 The generous host to lay upon the board.

Pindar. And both conversat as other men conversat.
 The poet is no poet at all hours,
 The hero is no hero with a friend.

Hiero. The virtuous, the valiant, and the wise,
 Have ever been thy friends, and they alone.

Pindar. Few have I found, and fewer have I sought.
 Apart I chose to stand. The purest air
 Breathes o'er high downs on solitary men.
 Thou smilest, O king Hiero, at my words,
 Who seest me in thy court.

Hiero. No, no, my friend!

Pindar. We must not penetrate the smile of kings,
 There may be secrets in it.

Hiero. Open mine;
 There is but one for thee; and it is this;
 'Tis written on no scroll, but on my heart;
 Command I dare not call it, though I would . . .
 Pindar is Pindar, Hiero is but king.

Pindar. Embolden'd when I ought to be abash'd,
 I venture now to question thee.

Hiero. Obey.
 Sprinkle a drop of Lethe on the fount
 Of sparkling Dirce, nor remember Thebes,
 Or him alone remember, him whose harp
 Rais'd up her walls, which harp thou strikest now
 With hand more potent than Amphion's was.
 Here shalt thou dwell in honour, long thy due,
 And sing to us thy even-song of life.

TO CORINTH.

QUEEN of the double sea, beloved of him
 Who shakes the world's foundations, thou hast seen
 Glory in all her beauty, all her forms ;
 Seen her walk back with Theseus when he left
 The bones of Sciron bleaching to the wind,
 Above the ocean's roar and cormorant's flight,
 So high that vastest billows from above
 Show but like herbage waving in the mead ;
 Seen generations through thy Isthmian games,
 And pass away ; the beautiful, the brave,
 And them who sang their praises. But, O Queen,
 Audible still, and far beyond thy cliffs,
 As when they first were utter'd, are those words
 Divine which praised the valiant and the just ;
 And tears have often stopt, upon that ridge
 So perilous, him who brought before his eye
 The Colchian babes. "Stay! spare him! save the last!
 Medea! Is that blood? again! it drops
 From my imploring hand upon my feet!
 I will invoke the Eumenides no more,
 I will forgive thee, bless thee, bend to thee
 In all thy wishes, do but thou, Medea,
 Tell me, one lives." "And shall I too deceive?"
 Cries from the fiery car an angry voice ;
 And swifter than two falling stars descend,
 Two breathless bodies ; warm, soft, motionless,
 As flowers in stillest noon before the sun,
 They lie three paces from him : such they lie
 As when he left them sleeping side by side,
 A mother's arm round each, a mother's cheeks
 Between them, flush'd with happiness and love.
 He was more changed than they were, doomed to show
 Thee and the stranger, how defaced and scarr'd
 Grief hunts us down the precipice of years,
 And whom the faithless prey upon the last.
 To give the inertest masses of our earth
 Her loveliest forms, was thine ; to fix the Gods
 Within thy walls, and hang their tripods round
 With fruits and foliage knowing not decay.
 A nobler work remains : thy citadel
 Invites all Greece : o'er lands and floods remote
 Many are the hearts that still beat high for thee :

Confide then in thy strength, and unappall'd
 Look down upon the plain, while yokemate kings
 Run bellowing where their herdsmen goad them on.
 Instinct is sharp in them and terror true,
 They smell the floor whereon their necks must lie.

PTOLEMY AND THEOCRITOS.

Ptolemy. Pleasant art thou, Theocritos! The pair
 Thou broughtest forward to our festival
 Of yesterday, Praxinoe and Gorgo,
 Are worthy pair for Aristophanes,
 Had he been living, to have brought on stage:
 Even grave Menander, wittiest of the wise,
 Had smiled and caught thee by the hand for this.

Theocritos. Ah! to be witty is hard work sometimes.
 'Tis easier to lie down along the grass,
 Where there is any, grass there none is here.

Ptolemy. But here are couches where we may repose
 And dream as easily. Thy dreams were all
 For Sicily, about the Nymphs and swains.

Theocritos. It seems an easier matter to compose
 Idyls of shepherds and of little Gods
 Than great heroic men.

Ptolemy. Thou hast done both.

Theocritos. Neither is easy. Grass in Sicily
 Is slippery, scant the turf and hard to tread.
 The sheep oft wonder, and crowd close, at sight
 Of venturous shepherd, putting pipe to lip
 And, ere he blow it, sprawling heels in air.
 I have sung hymns; but hymns with fuller breath
 Are chaunted by my friend Kallimakos.

Ptolemy. Friend! O strange man! poet call poet friend!
 If my good genius brought thee hither, thanks
 We both may pay him.

Theocritos. Well indeed may I.

Ptolemy. What! for disturbing dreams of nymphs and swains,
 And whispering leaves of platan and of pine?
 Sweet whispers! but with sweeter underneath.

Theocritos. No; but for banishing far different ones,
 Such as were facts in our fair Sicily.
 Had kings like Ptolemy been living then,

However far removed this empire lies,
Phalaris never had shut up within
His brazen bull the bravest and the best.

Ptolemy. Kings have their duties : it concerns them all
To take good heed that none betray their trust,
Lest odious be the name, and they themselves
Fall thro' the crime of one : the crowns they wear
Make some hot-headed, nearly all weak-eyed.

'Tis written how this bull went close behind,
Bellowing his thunders, belching smoke and flame,
Wherever that king went.

Theocritus. No fiction, sire,
Of poets, or historians, who feign more.

Ptolemy. Pleasanter in our Ægypt be thy dreams !
Come, let me hear the latest ; speak it out.

Theocritus. Last night, beneath the shadow of a sphynx
I fancied I was lying, and I dream'd
Only of placid Gods and generous kings.

Ptolemy. Knave ! knave ! on neither shall thy dream be vain.

THE FAMINE IN ETRURIA.*

BEYOND the confines of a race cognate,
Pelagic, and their hunger well appeas'd,
Had travel'd the Etrurians : age alone
Would have protected them throughout all lands
When it was widely known they sought the God
At Delphi ; now they stood beneath his fane.
But some of them had rashly pluckt the boughs
Of bay in passing ; when a voice was heard
In modulated tones ; and these the words.

*Impious the man who snaps the budding bay,
Or bruises it, thus hastening its decay :*

*This may be pardon'd in the goats and swine ;
Brutes know not what is awful and divine.*

Obedient were they all.

When they approach

* Dionysius of Halicarnassus records this famine and its consequences, adding the appeal to the oracle, which oracle demanded, in addition to arrears, a tenth of the males. After this their calamity, the Etrurians, who were the Japanese of Europe three thousand years ago, in civility and industry, lost the dominion of Italy, still observing the oracle, and devoting a tenth of their possessions and of their children to their Gods' vicegerent and subordinates.

The temple, one alone received a branch,
 And he was bidden to come forth and speak.
 Then came he forth and, kneeling, thus spake he.

“The springs are sunk into the earth again,
 Thou seest, Apollo, who seest all below,
 And, where the fountains bubbled up, the bats
 Widen their wings and crouch, nor seek for flies,
 For even the flies around are dead with drought,
 And the thin knots, now thinner, cease to whirr.

Not only the light wanderers of the air,
 The very serpents, mother Earth's first-born,
 And living in all lands, live not with us.
 Python, the glory of thy silver bow,
 Would not have rais'd his threatening head, but croucht
 At his full length, and panted, not defied.

Piteous it is, if we can pity now
 Aught but ourselves, to see the ox's ribs
 White under him who drove them to the field,
 And drying as they drop his bitter tears.
 Where now the poppy-crown? where harvest home? ”
 Fain would I rest upon a thought so sweet,
 If sweet be any thought of happiness
 Departed, and hope with it.

Worse remains.

A mother had no heart to kill her babe,
 But offered it to one who had: he said
 A plumper turnip was too high a price;
 And she turn'd back in anger and in scorn . . .
 But soon (even scorn and anger sank) return'd,
 For she had one babe left, and one might live.

The God was deaf to every prayer; at length
 They sought his oracle with better hopes;
 Then said he from his inner shrine.

“'Tis here.

Here only should ye seek me, willful men!
 Depart; and sacrifice to me the tenth
 Of all that earth may bear to you henceforth.
 After due reverence to the priest ordain'd
 To take it; he will lustrate you and bless
 Your children.”

Joyous they return'd, such joy
 As could find entrance in such shrunk abodes.
 They brought the priest his tenth: he scowl'd on them.

“Bring the tenth child,” cried he, “The God we serve
 Delights in song, and song our God must have.”
 “Few are now left us,” said the weeping sires,

"And hunger leaves not even voice behind,
Nor are all fit for it."

"Begone, perverse!"

Cried he . . . "but ere ye go I promise ye
We of our temple can bring voices out,
And they shall warble in our sacred choir:
The virgins we will shut from eyes profane."
Sorrowing the Etrurians led their children forth
Devoted to the God of light and song.

THE ALTAR OF MODESTY.

Soon as the stranger turns his step away
From Lacedæmon, and pursues the road
Toward the towers of Elis, where a ford
Whitens with rippling wave the river-bank,
Sacred to Modesty an altar stood.
Hither the gentle Leda brought her child,
Her Helena, whom Theseus had borne off,
And thus reproved her, by none other heard.
"How couldst thou, Helena, leave house and home
And parent, and twin brothers, bright as stars?
With what discourse could Theseus tempt thee hence?
He is not tender, is not bland, nor chaste,
Nor even young.

I too was once beguiled
By a white stately swan I loved to feed,
Who drove the rest away that followed him;
And wicked Theseus, then a boy, laught loud
Seeing my downcast eyes; and, when I turn'd
To chide him, *Ah poor Leda!* whined the rogue.
Once as I watcht him wrestling in the ring,
Me, tho' I stood far distant, he espied
And waddled nearer, and whined childishly
Poor Leda! what a pity! naughty swan!
And shaped his lips as deftly as he could
Into a beak; then from a reed within
Whistled low querulous notes, as swan may do;
Lastly, to crown his impudence, drew wings
Over his shoulders, shaking them outspread.

Where am I rambling? What has this to do
With such a folly as was his and thine?
Tell me . . . now we are seated . . . all that past."

Then Helena . . but first sigh'd more than once.
 "Blamable was our guest, but worse his friend
 Pirithöos, who extol'd me far above
 All other Spartan maids, and earnestly
 Pointed me out to him. No, never more
 In presence of Pirithöos will I dance,
 Afraid to celebrate Diana's games."

"I want to hear of Theseus, not of him."
 Said Leda. She obeyed.

"He prais'd the land
 Of Cecrops, its convivial hours, its girls
 Waving a golden tettinx in their hair,
 Yet Helena's prefer'd he unadorn'd.
 Brave, said he, were his countrymen, and mild
 And facil were their Gods; not Pallas' self
 Beheld them ever with unkindly glance,
 Standing among the Graces, and but shook
 Her head at any little fault of theirs.
 Harp, song, and dance, beneath the olive-trees,
 He promist me, on turf where tymbrels shed
 Showers of white blossoms on the sandal'd feet:
 And then in autumn O what rites and games!
 Such as when Bakkos, India's kings subdued
 And India's tigers crouching under him,
 Pronounced this one command, *Be happy all!*
 Yet Theseus was himself most miserable;
 He said it, and, as if it were a crime
 To suffer, humbly prayed me to forgive.
 I was not merciless; it was enough
 To seem so in the midst of tears and sighs.
 'Who would,' said I, 'prefer the cares of love
 That could beneath the shade of friendship rest
 And hear the praises of himself and friend;
 Thine is Pirithöos, flourishing in youth
 And ready to learn anything from thee,
 And any danger at thy side incur,
 Nearer to thee in years, and beautiful
 As was the royal youth an eagle bore
 From Ida, beautiful as he who fell
 Beneath Apollo's quoit; but never hope
 With me such praises; never hope to calm
 (Whatever thou persuadest me) my fears.'
 Then he. 'Not always is the ear content
 With praises, nor with friendship is the breast:
 Of this the girls of Sparta seem aware,
 And often chide me for it. When we reach

Pandion's city thou shalt prove thro' life
Fond is the lover as is firm the friend.'

I answered, 'There are others thou hast left,
Perfidious Theseus, in that isle afar
Where tower a hundred cities.'

Mother dear,
Now listen what he own'd and what denied.
We know how cruel Minos was, what law
When he had conquered Athens he imposed ;
Which to avoid, the father sent his son
Hither ; strong, ardent, uncontrollable,
Away he burst to lands where Zeus was born,
And there he slew the Minotaur : the thread
That guided him throughout that labyrinth's
Intricate turns was Ariadne's gift.
Nor was he faithless to her, but he loved
Me better, and he swore by every God
Of late propitious to him, he who left
Wealth, kingdom, beauty, should be mine alone ;
Mine marble palaces, Hymettos mine,
And that sweet honey from those thymy knolls
Where only bees have anything to do.

Now, mother ! should I, can I, tell you more ?
My poor old prying nurse, who really knows
Many things, but imagines she knows more,
Thinking I must be weary and might want
To rest my ankles higher than the floor,
Lifted up one above the couch's edge ;
Then down she stoopt that she might better peer.
Well I remember it, because she trod
On my loose hair ; then doubling under her
Both knees, she looked quite close, sagaciously,
Then, rising up, she spat behind her back,
And then ran out, lifting in wonderment
Her head aloft and spreading out both arms,
Exclaimed, '*Zeus ! Zeus ! be prais'd ! he hath preserved
His child : then muttered she with scornful voice,
A hero ! of mad heroes most insane !
He indeed ! he slay Minotaurs ! I now
Believe he left the virgin on the shore
Of Dia ; what could he do else ? O age
Degenerate ! which for prowess can but boast
Such men as Theseus and Alcides are.
Ah ! in my day . . . but all such days are past.*'"

These words repeated by the unwary maid
Sooth'd Leda's breast ; and softly fell her tears,

Softly too fell her daughter's at the sight,
 "Mother, I think I did not love him much,
 I am quite sure I do not love him now,
 And why I went with him I can not guess.
 Do not be angry; he will be ashamed
 To come again, ashamed as much as I.
 If I had not return'd you might have been
 A little sorry, certainly I should,
 But here you see me fresh and fond as ever."
 After a while said Leda, "Thou hast told
 The happier part, and now relate the rest,
 Nor canst thou do it in a fitter place;
 For here Odysseus* (unlike thy return)
 Beneath love's chaster torches carried home
 Penelope. Her sire Icaros,
 Altho' he had approved the worthy choice,
 Altho' he had invited to his house
 The future son, and altho' far beyond
 All others, brave, and wary, and expert
 In household thrift was Laertiades,
 And safe, with rocks around, his island stood,
 Felt now the grief a parent ever feels
 To lose a child.

The nuptial festival
 Prorogued his sorrows with his guests about,
 For Bakkos wound with ivy and with flowers
 Together Age and Youth upon that day.
 All was well then, and jocund dreams enwrought
 The soundly sleeping sire: but when arose
 Morn, and he saw the coronels collapse
 Droop down the chamber door, and heard the neigh
 Of steeds, and saw the broken cates removed
 From the piled table, then, ah then indeed
 Sorrow, awhile remoter, prest again
 Upon his temples, his ears sob'd, his knees
 Gave way."

Then shuddered Helena, and said,
 "How cruel was Odysseus thus to pain
 Poor old Icaros."

"Crueller," replied
 Leda, "is she who seeks a home unknown
 Leaving a parent ignorant of her flight."

* Odysseus here recovers his proper name instead of *Ulysses*, he being neither Roman nor English. But it is only where those of his country are supposed to be speaking: in us it would be affectation: with us he is naturalized.

Strong as may grief be, curiosity
Creeps over and beyond it.

Leda, calm'd,
Could now resume her questioning; she askt
What caus'd her error: Helena would turn
The question, and entreated to know more
About Penelope, and what result.

"Grant, O ye Gods! she may be safe at home!"
Leda could now but smile, with gentle palm
Patted her cheek, and from her bosom drew
With finger slipping back the chin that dropt
Into it, obstinate to keep its place.
Then Helena, first looking round about,
Pursued her narrative.

"I will relate
The whole; for now I see you will not ask
Such idle questions as the nurse, insane,
Else how could she deem me so tiger-like
As bite? She gave me signs by nod and wink,
Finding her words convey no sense at all:
Hardly such rudeness can the crone object
To sister Clytemnestra: well you know,
Sweet mother, that your Helena was taught
Far different manners, nor would, even tho' hurt,
Use tooth or nail, but tremble as the strings
Of a lyre tremble if swept all at once."
Leda, to hide her blushes, prest her face
On the fresh herbage, fearing to look up,
And twitcht unconsciously the brittle grass.

"He did not hurt thee, then?"

"Quite the reverse;
He swore he would not, and he kept his word:
Instead of hurting, he protected me
Completely."

"O ye Gods above!" exclaimed
The mother in alarm.

"Ah what a tale!
Yet, yet, go on with it; lay bare the whole
And end with it my pangs of grief and fear.
Thou hast been shown by me that even the shy
Have err'd from steadiness; how far hast thou!
If more austere thy sister than befits,
If at the wanton boys she stamps her foot,
Thou art too ready to incline an ear
To their excuses. I have seen thee stand,
Trip on, turn back, and ask what *can* they mean,

And wait, nor over-readily dismiss
The laughing urchins with responsive laugh.

Nature may throw a gloom o'er Modesty
But she serenest the brow with purer light,
Light pure as on Olympos Gods enjoy."

She paus'd, and sigh'd.

Commanded to confess,

The daughter said, "A grove there is not far
Beyond the city, but from thence unseen,
Because the city and the little hill
Conceal it; there in winter runs a brook,
But at this season its steep crumbling banks
Are join'd together by a fallen oak
The winds have thrown there: boughs and bark afford
An easy passage over.

Theseus leapt

From the low car that bore us: when we reacht
The farther side, perceiving my alarm
He laid me on the grass, with gentlest hand
Pressing my bosom to allay my fear,
And often was it careful to provide
That neither stick, nor stone beneath, nor bent
Should harm me; for the bent in woods is stiff."

While she all this was saying, Leda's breath
Blew hard and thick upon her braided hair.

"Nemesis will o'ertake thee," she sigh'd out,
"Unless thou tell it all from first to last."

Now somewhat less dissembling, thus adjured,
Helena spake again.

"To bring back all

Into my mind, so hurried by the road,
The rapine, the recovery, and the spears
Of my two brothers thrust against the reins,
Is hard.

The lover, lately so submiss,

Grew furious and sprang down: first to himself
He muttered, then to me; he bade me go,
He bade me stay. We hear the tramp of steeds.
Away, cried he, and threw me on the car.

But my two brothers had come up: the bits
Drawn tightly in, the javelins vibrated.

Stay, robber! they exclaim, their angry eyes
Glaring like stars that struggle with a stream.

What! arm'd against the unarm'd! cried he in scorn,
Turning aside the points with open hand,
Off, boys! what would ye? think ye that I dread

*Your javelins? no; your youth, your parentage,
Aves me; take homeward, take with you unharm'd
Your virgin sister; for the Powers above
Have by sure omen disapproved my deed.
Thus he; and they abstain'd: then, to himself,
Patiently bear thy vulture, patiently
Look down from thy chain'd neck and watch uptorn
Thy growing liver by insatiate beak;
Rest, O Prometheus, on the piercing flints,
Endure the lightning on unclosing eyes,
Never hast thou endured love torn away
Upon the threshold from thine open arms."*

The maiden blusht as she began the tale
And sorrowed as she closed it: half afraid
Her mother might observe her, she besought
The sequel of Penelope: aware
Of her devices, Leda sweetly gazed
And thus began to moralize her tale.

"On those united by an equal love
Smiles every morning, every evening brings
Fresh hymenæals: youthful maid should find
A youthful husband; such be thine, my child,
And ever mindful how chaste love excells
Unchaste, be thou Penelope, be thine
Odysseus.

I related how it grieved
Icarios to have bid his child farewell.
At first he turn'd away his tearful eyes,
And rested on the lintel of the door
His troubled brow; but soon he heard the tramp
Of the car-horses and the rolling wheels
That grated near, then where the stones no more
Paved the highway and sounds came indistinct,
Brought to him only by the fitful breeze,
Rushing out wildly thro' the city gate,
Broken in spirit, weak in sight, he saw
Odysseus, who had slackened now the reins
To hear more leisurely the low discourse
Of his beloved.

Thro' deep husky groans,
In broken voice, *Restore my child!* he cried,
*True, I did yield her to thee; not so deaf
Wast thou that day, no, nor that day was I
Childless as now thou makest me: restore
My only daughter, my heart's sole delight,
My age's sole support. Thee many a maid*

*May please as well as she. O give her back
In pity, or come with me both again.*

Odysseus heard and checkt and loost the reins.
The gentle daughter threw her left arm round
The old man's neck, and sooth'd his wrinkled cheek
With her warm tears: the youth had paus'd, then spake.
*Me Sparta might detain, me might the home
Of our Penelope, but home have I,
Home, people, aged sire, and household gods,
Neglected never with impunity.*

*Pious! if thou art pious, said the sire,
Restore her: she is willing, as thou seest.*

Let her then choose, said he of Ithaca.
Penelope cast down her pallid brow
While her right hand held tight the hero's vest,
And sobs shook heavily her struggling heart.
*Choose, choose, Icarious cried; remember her
Who bore thee; pity me.*

Fierce tortures wrung
Nor broke her silence.

Speak, Penelope!
Said softly her Odysseus. Round the neck
Paternal still her arm was left, her face
Turn'd to the other side, her veil drawn close,
Heavy with tears, until with groan and gasp
The weak neck fell upon the neck less weak.
Sorrowful, and yet proud at heart, return'd
Icarious home: the elders his compeers
Came forth and envied him and soon consoled:
Hence was devoted (why wert thou away?)
That low turf altar rais'd to Modesty."

IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON.

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the king
Had gone away, took his right-hand, and said,
"O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Calchas heard
Distinctly what the Goddess spake. Old-age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew
My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood

While I was resting on her knee both arms
 And hitting it to make her mind my words,
 And looking in her face, and she in mine,
 Might not he also hear one word amiss,
 Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus ?”
 The father placed his cheek upon her head,
 And tears dropt down it, but the king of men
 Replied not. Then the maiden spake once more.
 “ O father ! sayst thou nothing ? Hear'st thou not
 Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,
 Listen'd to fondly, and awaken'd me
 To hear my voice amid the voice of birds,
 When it was inarticulate as theirs,
 And the down deadened it within the nest ?”
 He moved her gently from him, silent still,
 And this, and this alone, brought tears from her,
 Altho' she saw fate nearer : then with sighs,
 “ I thought to have laid down my hair before
 Benignant Artemis, and not have dimm'd
 Her polisht altar with my virgin blood ;
 I thought to have selected the white flowers
 To please the Nymphs, and to have askt of each
 By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
 Whether, since both my parents will'd the change,
 I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipt brow ;
 And (after these who mind us girls the most)
 Adore our own Athena,* that she would
 Regard me mildly with her azure eyes.
 But, father ! to see you no more, and see
 Your love, O father ! go ere I am gone . . .”
 Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
 Bending his lofty head far over her's,
 And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst.
 He turn'd away ; not far, but silent still.
 She now first shudder'd ; for in him, so nigh,
 So long a silence seem'd the approach of death,
 And like it. Once again she rais'd her voice.
 “ O father ! if the ships are now detain'd,
 And all your vows move not the Gods above,
 When the knife strikes me there will be one prayer
 The less to them : and purer can there be
 Any, or more fervent than the daughter's prayer
 For her dear father's safety and success ?”
 A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.

* Pallas Athena was the patroness of Argos.

An aged man now enter'd, and without
 One word, stept slowly on, and took the wrist
 Of the pale maiden. She lookt up, and saw
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes.
 Then turn'd she where her parent stood, and cried
 "O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail."

PENELOPE AND PHEIDO.

Pheido. Ha! what strange stories these old people tell!
 Will you believe me, gracious lady queen?
 Yesterday-eve behind this figtree sate
 Melantheus and that idler Iros, he
 Who breaks more bread than the best workman earns,
 And seem'd contending which should lie the most.

Penelope. What did they talk about?

Pheido. Why, they discourst
 About our lord, be sure, as all men do.
 Iros, who scratcht his shoulder, said he tried
 To shirk the ships that were afloat for Troy.
 I could well-nigh have smitten him, but thought
 So wise a man, with such a queen for wife,
 So beautiful, so provident of corn
 And oil and wine, must suddenly have lost
 His wits, by sun-stroke, or magician's wand
 Or witches charm, to leave her willingly.

Penelope. Willingly not, but duteously; the Gods
 Urged him, and he obey'd: the chiefs of Greece
 Knew that they wanted much his prudent mind,
 Kings tho' they were, to counsel them aright.
 There was no folly in their thinking so.
 Brave as he was, he would have staid at home,
 But Hellas rose in arms to punish fraud
 And rapine. When he left me, tears he shed,
 Which he had never done but on that day
 When on his mother's breast he cried for milk
 And milk was there no longer. He was born
 For glory.

Pheido. O sweet mistress! what is that?

Penelope. To carry arms, and quell thereby the proud.

Pheido. Here are no robbers in these blessed realms,

Here in our Ithaca no boars, no wolves
No dragons : glory then is gone abroad,
Unless it may be found in cestuses.

Penelope. But there are monarchs, far across the sea,
Proud monarchs, and they boast of sons as proud,
Who steal the wives of those who trusted them,
And purple robes therewith and treasured gold
And silver.

Pheido. May the Gods guide safely home
Our master ! Will he bring back purple robes,
Silver, and gold ? he should have more than half.
But O those purple robes ! how they will suit
The lovely shoulders of our gracious queen.
Do thou, Poseidon, let them come unhurt
Upon our shores ; for thy salt waves might wash
The colour out ; chide them, forbid them thou !
Pray to him, O sweet lady ! for your prayers
Will reach him sooner than your handmaid's could ;
Beside, the wealthy always can prevail
With gifts ; and upon Neritos are kids
And goats in plenty, easy to be caught
If they know Gods are waiting.

Penelope. We will think
About this matter ; but Laertes first
Must be consulted : he knows every kid
And goat upon the rocks there.

Now lay by
The yarn, and leave this figtree for yon vines,
Where I can trust thee better than the rest
Of all my maidens ; for thy truthful tongue
Never laid blame upon the wasp when gaps
I found among the bunches ; go, and cull
The ripest ; thou shalt have two figs for each.

Pheido. All the blue figs lie slit upon the wall
For winter use, and little lizards keep,
With never-closing eye and panting heart,
Watch and ward over them against the flies
And ants, and hold those fast with viscous tongue,
Sharp-pointed, swiftly out and swiftly in.
The green and yellow are ungathered yet
Mostly. Telemakos is tall enough
To help me up with hand below my heel,
And shoulder close against the trunk applied.

Penelope. Telemakos plies other work : he mends
The nets to catch those busy birds that hang
Tail downward and inflict sad wounds on fig.

Away! but come back soon, and then for woof.
 Idleness ill befits a royal house:
 The husbandman, who labours hard may rest
 In the midday, and thereby shorten night.

ACHILLES AND HELENA ON IDA.

Helena. Where am I? O ye blessed ones above,
 Desert me not! ye Twain who brought me hither!
 Was it a dream?

Stranger! thou seemest thoughtful;
 Couldst thou not answer me? why silent? speak,
 I do implore thee.

Achilles. Neither they nor feet
 Of mules have borne thee where thou standest, Helena!
 Whether 'twas in the hour of early sleep
 Or whether 'twas in morning's, know I not,
 But Aphrodite, listening to my prayer,
 And Thetis with her, gentle as herself,
 Have wafted thee into these solitudes,
 And to me also pointed out the way,
 That I the pride of Sparta might behold
 And the Earth's marvel. How my heart expands,
 But agonizes too, at thee, the cause
 To Hellas of innumerable woes.

Helena. Stranger! thy voice, thy stature, and thy mien
 Approve thee one whom Goddesses and Gods
 Might well conduct and glory in; but who,
 If earthly, are thou?

Achilles. Son of Peleus am I.
 Tremble not, turn not pale, bend not thy knee.

Helena. Spare me, thou Goddess-born! thou cherisht son
 Of silver-footed Thetis! Sure, Chryseis
 And she who rais'd within thy generous breast
 More pity than disdain for cruel wrong,
 Briseis, now might soften it: lead not
 Me too into captivity. Ah! woes
 I have brought down on Hellas; on myself
 Have fallen woes, and will for ever fall.

Achilles. Daughter of Zeus! what words are thine! they raise
 No pity in my breast, none needest thou
 Within my reach to give, but bitter wrath

Thou raisest at indignity and wrong.
 Chryseis, daughter of that aged priest
 Who in this land performs due sacrifice
 To his Apollo, was another's lot.
 Insolent and unworthy, he hath brought
 More sorrows on our people even than thou,
 And dogs and vultures prey upon the brave
 Who fell without a wound.

Mine is indeed
 Briseis, chaste and beautiful Briseis,
 He contumacious, proud at once and base
 Would tear her from me.

Gods above! what land
 Behold ye where the wolf hath dared to seize
 Kid which a lion hath taken.

Never fear
 Mortal shall lead thee into servitude;
 What impious wretch would dare it? hath not Zeus
 Thundered above these mountains? Doth not he,
 Wide-seeing, see all earth but Ida? watch
 Over all creatures but his progeny?
 Capaneus and Typhœus less offended
 Than would the wretch whose grasp should violate
 The golden hair of Helena.

Tremblest thou,
 Irresolute, distrustful?

Helena. I must tremble,
 And more and more.

Achilles. Then take my hand.

Helena. And may I?
 May I? and hold it? I am comforted.

Achilles. The scene around us, calm and silent, ought
 To comfort thee: turnest thou to survey it?
 Perhaps it is unknown to thee.

Helena. 'Tis so.
 Since my arrival I have never gone
 Beyond the city-walls.

Achilles. Gaze freely then,
 Perplexed no longer. Pleasant are these downs,
 Pleasant the level eminence, by broom
 Surrounded, and with myrtle underneath
 And crispleaved beech and broad dark pine above.
 Rare place for boars: why are my dogs at home,
 And where for sylvan sport my leisure hours.

Helena. But those are gloomy places, not so this.
 Frightful are boars and wolves and such like things.

But here how pretty is the slender grass
 Bent by the glossy insects as they climb
 Or light upon it, or upon the tall
 Sisterhoods of grey lavender! their names
 I recollect now I have found them here
 Within this very hour and seen them close.
 The dark-eyed cistus and gay citisus
 Are here too.

Achilles. Wonderful! how couldst thou learn
 To name so many plants?

Helena. I could name ten.
 Look! see the little troops of serpolet
 Running in wild disorder here and there.
 Thou knowest these perhaps and many more.

Achilles. Keiron taught me, while walking at his side
 And he was culling herbs to cure the hurt
 His brother Centaurs might in play receive.
 Wonderous his knowledge; I was proud to learn.
 Sometimes he seated me and made me sing:
 Sometimes he took the lyre and sang himself.
 At intervals I catch the fleeting words
 He sang to me.

Helena. He sang of war, no doubt.
 Repeat his words, if thou art loth to sing.

Achilles. Look at those yellow poppies! were the words,
*They are come out to catch what'er the sun
 Will throw into their cups; their faces show
 Their joyance. Son of Peleus! they begin
 Their nodding dance, and wait but for the lyre.*

Helena. Childish! for one with such a spear against
 His shoulder; even its shadow terrible,
 It seems to make a chasm across the plain.

Achilles. To talk or think as children think and talk
 Is not at all times such a proof of folly;
 There may be hours when it shall push aside
 Griefs, where the strength of graver wisdom fails.

Helena. But Keiron, when he sang to thee of flowers
 Show'd little.

Achilles. To his lyre he sang the loves
 Of Hyacinthos and Narcissos, brought
 Back by the Hours on their unwearied feet,
 Regular in their courses as the stars.
 Many of the trees and bright-eyed flowers once lived
 And moved, and even spoke, as we are speaking.
 Memories they yet may have, tho' they have cares
 No longer.

Helena. They then have no memories,
They see their beauty only.

Achilles. Helena!
Thou turnest pale and droopest.

Helena. Gum or blossom
Or this high place, or something else unseen,
Hath made me dizzy: can it be the wind?

Achilles. Air there is none.

Helena. I wish there were a little.

Achilles. Be seated now.

Helena. The feeble are obedient.

Achilles. 'Twas on this very ground where we repose
They who conducted me by certain signs
Told me the prize of beauty was awarded.
One of them smiled; the other, whom in duty
I love the most, lookt anxious and let fall
Some tears.

Helena. Yet she was not one of the vanquish't.

Achilles. Goddesses then contended. Helena
Was absent, and too young.

Helena. Alas! how fatal
Was the decision of the arbiter.

Could not thy sire the venerable Peleus,
And could not Pyrrhos, child so beautiful
And helpless, have detain'd thee from this war?

Achilles. No reverence and no friendship for the race
Of Atreus brought me against Troy; I hate,
Detest and execrate alike both brothers;
Another is more odious to me still,
I will forbear to name him. The brave man
Holding the hearth as sacred as the temple,
Violates never hospitality.

He carries not away the gold he finds
Within the house, folds not up purple linen
Workt for solemnities, conveying it
Stealthily from the cedar chest to stow
In the dark ship, together with a wife
Confid'd to him by her absent lord.

I will not say to love thee was a crime;
Priam or Nestor might, even at their years,
But to avow and act on the avowal
Is what the Gods, if righteous, will chastise.

Helena. But Aphrodite urg'd me, day and night,
Telling me that to make her break her vow
To Paris was inexpiable sin.
So she told Paris at the selfsame hours,

And quite as often, he repeated it
Every morning, showing how his dreams
Tallied with mine exactly. So, at last . . .

Achilles. The last is not yet come. By all the Gods
If I should ever meet him, face to face
I with this spear transfix him.

Helena. Pray, do not,
For Aphrodite never would forgive thee.

Achilles. I am not sure of that; she soon forgets.
Variable as Iris, she one day
Favours, the next forsakes.

Helena. She may forsake
Me then!

Achilles. But other Deities
Watch over and protect thee. Thy brave brothers
Are with them at this very hour, and they
Are never absent from their festivals.

Helena. Oh! were they living! that thou couldst have seen
them!

Achilles. Companions of my father on the Phasis
They were his guests before they went, all three,
To hunt the boar of Calydon; that day
Brought many sorrows upon brave men's hearts,
A woman was the cause.

Helena. Horrible creature!
The boar, I mean . . . Didst thou not see the Twins?

Achilles. I saw them not; desirous as I was
That I might learn from them and practise with them
Whatever is most laudable and manly.
My father, fearing my impetuosity
(Old men will call it so) and inexperience
Sent me away. Soothsayers had foretold
Some mischief to me from an arrow-wound:
Among the brakes an arrow may fly wide,
Glancing from trees.

Helena. Hadst thou but seen the Twins!
Tho' 'twere but once. The Sun will never shine
With his bright eyes upon such youths again.
Ah my brave brothers! how they tended me!
How loved me! often wishing me to mount
Each his horse first: they made me poise and hurl
Their javelins: they would teach me archery . . .
But they could only teach me to swim with them:
It gratified me rather to be prais'd
For anything than swimming.

Happy hours!

Soon over! does then happiness depart
 Sooner than beauty? Surely it might stay
 That little while.

Dear Kastor! Polydeukes
 Still dearer! often shall I think of you
 As you were, and as I was, on the bank
 Of the Eurotas.

Achilles. Is there not at home
 One once as dear?

Helena. Ah poor Hermione!
 A babe was she who could not play with me,
 Yet 'twas my pride and pleasure to survey
 Her roseate fingers on my unrobed breast:
 And I could almost envy then the goat
 That stamp'd and feebly cried to give her milk.
 My brothers teased her for it, wicked pair!
 Terrible, and almost as beautiful
 As thou art. Be not wroth; blush not for me.

Achilles. Helena! Helena of Menelaos!
 My mother is reported to have left
 About me only one part vulnerable;
 I have at last found where it is. Farewell!

Helena. O leave me not! I do beseech, I implore,
 Leave me not thus alone! these solitudes
 Are terrible: wild beasts must roam among them;
 There certainly are Fauns and Satyrs, there
 Cybele, who bears towers upon her head,
 Abhorring Aphrodite, persecuting
 All those *she* favours; and her priests so cruel
 That they are cruel even to themselves.
 She sees grim lions yoked before her car
 And hears their dismal roar, and sits serene.

Achilles. They who have brought thee hither in a cloud
 Will reconduct thee in a cloud, unseen
 And safely, to the city: be thou sure.
 Daughter of Leda and of Zeus, farewell!
 Not even this arm could save thee if our host
 Saw thee descending, trust the Gods who can,
 The Gods who sent me hither to announce
 That Helena shall close her eyes in Greece.

CORYTHOS.

CENONE had been weeping, but the blast
 Bitterly cold had dried her tears, for high
 Upon the mountain stood she, where the grass
 Was short and dry, and where the fir-tree cones
 Roll'd as the whirlwind rusht along the down.
 Thence she beheld the walls and temples doom'd
 So soon to fall, and view'd her husband's roof,
 (Hers he was once, altho' another's now)
 And call'd their Corythos from out the wood.
 "Go," said she, "go, my child! there is at Troy
 One who, without thy mother, may love *thee*.
 Thy father lives . . . alas! lives unaware
 How few before him lie his destined days:
 For now from Lemnos Philoctetes comes
 And brings with him the deadly shafts bequeath'd
 By Hercules, wherewith, the Fates have sung,
 Paris must perish and the city fall.
 Hated thou wilt not be by her he loves,
 Altho' no child she ever bore to him
 And thou art mine, if thou canst but delay
 The hour foredoom'd: he may remember days
 Of other times, and how serene they were,
 Days when the poplar on its bark retain'd
 Two names inscribed by him, and when invoked
 Was Xanthos to bear witness to his vow.
 When his lost son hath saved him, and he knows
 He may not be ungrateful, but become
 The kinder father for unkindness past."

She mingled kisses with o'erflowing tears,
 Embraced him, then consign'd him . . . not at once . . .
 To Agelaos: he was oft recall'd,
 And urged with admonitions fresh and fresh
 To keep as distant as was possible
 From wave sail-whitened and insidious shore,
 And every spot where Argive rampires rose.

Downward, thro' crags and briars they wend their way.
 Fixt to the place, she heard not long the shout
 Of Corythos, nor outcry of shrill birds
 He pelted, whooping; then she turn'd around
 Toward her mountain home, and thus exclaim'd . . .

"Mountains and woods, the birthplace of my child,
 I see ye yet! he, dearer to my eyes,
 Is lost to them! Paris, once gone, return'd

No more to me! alas! nor love remains
 Nor pledge of love! not only have I lost
 Him who might bring again to me past hours
 By countenance, by mien, by sound of laugh,
 By words persuasive, when presaging fear
 Darkened my brow, that cause was none for grief,
 I have lost here . . . how little if success
 Follow the loss! . . . all solace, all support!
 All things beside are just the same around.
 Xanthos and Simöis tremble at the touch
 Of early morning; then approaches me
 Tenedos, one unbroken mass distinct,
 And sidelong surges overleap the cliffs.
 I am changed nothing; nothing can I change:
 Such is the life of Nymphs; it must not cease,
 Nor must the comeliness of youth decay.

Wretched! what look I back on? that frail gift
 And fugitive, which others grasp, I mourn.

Cenone! O Cenone! beauteous once
 He thought thee; he whom thou wilt ever hold
 Beauteous and dear, now sees thee like the snow
 That lost its colour in a southern gale.

How easy is it to snap off the bud
 Of tender life, and sow upon a breast
 Laid open ineradicable cares!
 How soon droops youth when faith, that propt it, fails!
 How often in her anguish would the maid
 Recall irrevocable hours, and grieve
 Most for the man whose future grief she sees!

Asteropè, my sister! happy thou
 In him who loves but one! canst thou believe
 That Æsacos and Paris are cognate?
 But him the mild Arisbè bore; and him,
 Born of a furious River, Hecuba.

I envy not alone the happier wed,
 But even the wretched who avoid the light,
 The unmarried, too, whose parents turn'd aside
 Their nuptial torch, and widows o'er whose beds
 Black wreaths are drooping; for the pang that death
 Inflicts, time may, tho' time alone, assuage.

Where Nile besprinkles from his lotus-cup
 The nuptial floor; where sacred Ganges rolls
 Alike inscrutable his vaster stream,
 If Memnon's mother sheds ambrosial tears
 Before the sun arises; if, ye maids
 Of ocean, in the refuge of your caves

Ye daily hear your Thetis wail her loss,
 Shunning wise Glaucos, deaf to Triton's shell,
 To Doris, and the Nymphs that wait around ;
 If maids and matrons wail'd o'er Hector's corse,
 Mangled, and stretcht upon a tardy bier,
 Hector was still Andromache's, as when
 He drave before him the Achaian host,
 As when he tost his infant to his crest
 And laught that Hector's child could ever fear.

What fault ye Gods was mine, unless to love
 And be deserted, and to pass my nights
 Among the haunts of beasts, where wolves and bears
 Break my first slumber, and my last, with howls,
 And the winds roar incessant from above ?
 Perhaps the Gods hereafter may look down
 With gentler eyes, nor deem my fault so great.
 Howe'er it be, may Corythos be blest
 With other days, with better than pursuit
 Of stag, or net thrown over birds when driven
 By cold and hunger to scant oats unhous'd . . .
 O may they grant him happier, and forbid
 That children suffer when their sires transgress."

Meanwhile the youth was stopping near the walls,
 And stood there wondering that e'en those, so vast,
 So lofty, had resisted such a host
 Under so many tents on all sides round.

"But where is that old figtree ? where the scene
 Of Hector and Achilles face to face ?
 Where that of Venus when she drew the cloud
 Around my father to preserve his life ?"

Such were his questions, seizing the guide's hand,
 Hurrying him onward, and entreating him
 Forthwith to lead him into Troy itself,
 Even into Priam's house. Thus Agelaos
 Represses him.

"Thy mother's sole command
 Was *Onward ! straight to Helena's abode.*"

An aged man, who heard the two converse,
 Stopt them.

"O Dardan," cried the impatient boy,
 "Say where dwells Helena ?"

With sterner voice
 "Go," said the Dardan, "the destroyer's court
 To all is open . . . there it lies : pass on."
 The youth threw instantly both arms around
 The old man's neck, and, "Blessed," he exclaim'd,

“Blessed, to whom my mother’s injuries
 Are hateful! It is virtue so to hate
 The wicked Spartan. Here none other house
 Than Priam’s will I enter, where with his
 Abides my father, where Andromachè
 Prostrate on earth bemoans her husband slain,
 While that bold wanton, fearing neither Pan
 Nor Zeus, with busy needle works, I ween,
 For other temples golden tapestries,
 Or twitches the shrill harp with nail of Sphynx.”

Many, as they were speaking, past them by.
 One woman, pausing, askt them if the ships
 Could be discern’d from Ida whence they came,
 And whether favourable were the winds
 For their departure: to the eld she spake,
 But gazed upon the youth: he saw her cheeks
 Redden and pale; his guide too, not unmoved,
 Thought, if in Ilion be such beauty, who
 Would turn a glance elsewhere, tho’ all the Gods
 And all the Goddesses might promise more?
 Now saw the youth, nor had he seen till now,
 The maidens following her; their vests suocinct,
 Their hair close-braided; faultless all in form,
 All modest in demeanour. Not so fast
 The motion of his heart when rusht the boar
 Into his toils, and knotty cornel spear
 Whiz’d as it struck the bristles, and the tusks
 Rattled with gnashing rage thro’ boiling blood.

Whither were going they, she gently askt.
 “To where Assaracos and Ilos dwelt,”
 Replied the elder, “where dwells Paris now.”
 Then she, “The way is safer shown by us,
 And sooner will ye find him when he leaves
 The citadel. At early dawn he heard
 A clamour from the coast; and soon a skiff
 Was seen: an old man landed; one alone
 Came with him; ’twas Odysseus; more behind.
 Soon roam’d the sailors, culling on the coast
 Bay and verbena; soon was every prow
 Glimmering with these unhop’d-for signs of peace.”

Shaking his head, the Idæan answered thus.
 “’Twas surely Philoctetes who arrived.
 The arms he bears were those of Hercales,
 And now the bow of Nessos, and the shafts
 Infected by the Hydra, come against
 The falling city of Laomedon.”

Struck by the words she heard, the more she wisht
 To hear, the quicker went she on, and bade
 Her damsels hasten too: she did look back,
 Yet hasten'd. The Idæan strangers moved
 Tardily now thro' crowds who stood before
 The house of Hector: there they stood; there came
 Widows and maids and matrons, carrying
 Honey (the outraged Manes to appease)
 And children on their shoulders, who lookt up,
 Stretching their eyes, stretching their bodies out
 To see their equal-aged Astyanax.
 The older and the younger wept alike
 At the morn silence: all things were laid waste
 Around the roof-tree of their hero's house.

The palace now they reach where Paris dwelt;
 They wonder at the wide and lofty dome,
 The polisht columns and the brazen forms
 Of heroes and of Gods, and marble steps,
 And valves resounding at the gates unbarr'd.
 They enter them. What ivory! and what gold!
 What breathing images depicted there!
 Dædalos had enricht the Cretan king
 With divers; and his daughter when she fled
 With Theseus, who had slain the Minotaur,
 Brought part away within his hollow ship;
 And these were Helena's: a scient hand
 Drew her, the fairest, foremost into light
 Among the girls she danced with, while the Gods
 Of heaven and ocean gazed on her alone.
 Above them sate the Sire of all, and nigh
 She who on Cypros landed from her shell;
 Curl'd conchs less bright the round-eyed Tritons blew.

Helena sent for Paris: what had said
 The shepherd she related, but one fact
 Repressing . . . who the mother of the boy,
 And whom the boy resembled. Such was once
 Paris, the guest of Sparta; but ten years
 Had cull'd and carried off the flower of youth.

She thought not in these moments of his flight
 Inglorious from the spear of Diomed,
 Of nearer peril thought she; he, reclined
 Upon his purple couch, her fear controll'd.

"No Philoctetes is arrived, afar
 Sits he, alone upon the Lesbian rock,
 Heavy with mortal wound; a wing drives off
 The beasts from worrying their expected prey,

Often he waves it o'er his weary head
 Lest vulture settle on it, often sees
 The brazen breast of eagle close above,
 Too weak his voice to scare it off, too weak
 His groans, tho' louder. Thinkest he who bore
 All this from faithless friend, who sits athirst,
 Ahungered, on the beach, who bends his ear
 Down to the earth and hears the pulse of oars
 Fainter and fainter, and the seaman's song
 Lively as ever, and while he bemoans
 His wasting and immedicable wound . . .
 What can Lernæan arrow do against us ?
 Grant, if that far-famed bowman limp across
 The heavy sands crisp with Achaian gore,
 Year after year, in flakes not washt away,
 Where lies our danger ? He but comes to find
 Broken the chariot that had drag'd along
 Hector, the blackened pyre where Ajax lies,
 The corslet of Patroclus. Lo, O Troy !
 Those mighty hands that threaten now thy fall !
 Now is the time for us to turn our backs,
 To leave our heritage, to leave the fane
 Of Pallas, fane inviolate till now,
 The roofs that Neptune helpt her to erect,
 And over which Apollo, shining forth
 And shouting and exhorting, bent his bow.
 An old man bears an older on his back,
 Odysseus Philoctetes. Aye, 'tis time,
 My Helena, our footsteps to retrace
 Toward Mycænai : let us bear away
 Our household Gods, by former wars unmoved . . .
 Carry thou the Palladion in thy breast
 That trembles so with pious fear, and bring
 Gifts to Diana on Taygetos !
 The rampire of the Achaians is o'erthrown ;
 The Myrmidons are scattered ; every tent
 Lies open . . . that is little . . . for, behold !
 A lame man wins the race and grasps the prize !
 While dark invidious Heré exercised
 Her hatred on her judge, and arm'd the son
 Of Tydeus, and while Ajax rear'd his shield
 Covered with seven bull-hides, and Nereid-born
 The proud Æmonian shook Action's towers,
 Thy fears, even then, I might, in jest, rebuke.
 On me no prowess have the Gods bestow'd ?
 No Venus, no Apollo, favoured *me* !”

Her failing spirits with derisive glee
 And fondness he refresh't: her anxious thoughts
 Followed, and upon Corythos they dwelt.
 Often he met her eyes, nor shun'd they his,
 For, royal as she was and born of Zeus,
 She was compassionate, and bow'd her head
 To share her smiles and griefs with those below.
 All in her sight were level, for she stood
 High above all within the seagirt world.
 At last she questioned Corythos what brought
 His early footsteps thro' such dangerous ways,
 And from abode so peaceable and safe.
 At once he told her why he came: she held
 Her hand to Corythos: he stood ashamed
 Not to have hated her: he lookt, he sigh'd,
 He hung upon her words . . . what gentle words!
 How chaste her countenance.

“What open brows
 The brave and beauteous ever have!” thought she,
 “But even the hardiest, when above their heads
 Death is impending, shudder at the sight
 Of barrows on the sands and bones exposed
 And whitening in the wind, and cypresses
 From Ida waiting for dissever'd friends.”

CORYTHOS.

(SECOND PART.)

HELENA long had pondered, at what hour
 To charm her Paris with the novel sight
 Of such a son, so like him.

Seldom bears
 A beauteous mother beauteous progeny,
 Nor fathers often see such semblances
 As Corythos to his. To mortal man
 Rarely the Gods grant the same blessing twice;
 They smile at incense, nor give ear to prayer.
 With this regretful thought her mind recurs
 To one so infantine, one left behind
 At morning, from the breast she just had warm'd.
 “Will no one ever tell me what thou art,

Hermionè! how grows thy destined spouse
Orestes."

Now invade her other cares
How to retain her Paris . . . oft she wiaht
She had a boy like Corythos . . . at least
Hers she would make him by all tenderness,
Atoning, if atonement there could be,
For what his mother by her crime sustain'd . . .
But was it not decreed so from above?
She argued . . . and remorse was thus appeas'd.

Then Agelaos call'd she, and besought.
"Perform, O Agelaos, my request.

Two youths have been entrusted to thy care,
Paris and Corythos : one care is mine.
Already hast thou seen the torch extinct
That threatened Troy, and strong as he thy wish
Again to press thy earlier pupil's hand,
Be not thou overhasty : let a son
Receive a father's blessing quite alone."
Then he. "Not different were the wise commands
His mother gave me. Should I see the man
I left a child, he might not recognise
Old Agelaos in these wrinkled cheeks,
These temples sprinkled now with hoary hair,
These limbs now slow, this voice and spirit weak ;
Nor haply would the prince be overjoyed
To know his servant had outrun his lord
In virtue's path : my help the royal heir
Wants not ; but Corythos may want it, him
Never until death parts us will I leave."

Revolving in her mind a thousand schemes,
She now decided that her guest should come
Before his father when the harp and wine
Open the breast, and the first lamps were lit
To show the dauntless, unsuspecting youth ;
She oftentimes had thought of it before,
And now the day was come.

The Trojans turn'd
Again to strains of intermitted glee,
Not unafraid, however, of reproof
Tho' mild ; the times had so debased the lyre,
And for heroic deeds of better men,
It tinkled now, in city and in camp,
With little else than weak lasciviousness,
Until its strings were stifled with applause.
Helena heard not such complacently ;

Adulteress as she was, she had not lost
The early bloom of Spartan modesty.

Around the chamber shone the images
Of boys and maidens robed in vest succinct,
And holding burnisht lamps, whence incense wreath'd
Its heavy cloud whitened with cedar oil,
And under them the purple seats gleam'd forth,
And over was the residence of Gods,
And nectar-bearing youth, in light serene.

Helena, now impatient of delay,
Looks often out the portal's tissued folds
Heavy with fringe of interwoven gold,
And often stops when even Paris speaks,
Listening, but not to Paris as before,
And, once or twice, half springing from her seat.

Now enters Corythos : the splendours round
Amaze him, and one image strikes him dumb,
His lofty sire's : he would advance, but awe
Withholds him : he can only fix his gaze
On Helena.

When Paris first perceives
A stranger, of fresh age and ardent mien,
Advance, then hesitate, and then retreat
Disturb'd and trembling, voiceless, motionless,
Nameless, and without call or office there,
And when he sees the purple robe he wears,
Woven by Helena in former days,
Perhaps too for the man she since had loved,
A thousand furies rush into his breast,
He tears it off, he hurls it on the ground,
He strikes with rapid sword, the face, the neck,
The bosom, of his child, and with his heel
Stamps on the hands in vain to heaven uprais'd,
And hears, infuriate wretch ! but bubbling blood,
And one loud female shriek . . . *Thy child ! thy child !*

•
PELEUS AND THETIS.

Thetis. O Peleus ! whom the Gods have given me
For all my happiness on earth, a bliss
I thought too great . . .

Peleus. Why sighest thou ? why shed
Those tears ? why sudden silence ? our last tears

Should then have fallen when the Fates divided us,
 Saying, earth is not thine ; that he who rules
 The waters call'd thee. Bitter those that flow
 Between the loved and loving when they part,
 And ought to be ; woe to the inhuman wretch
 Who wishes they were not : but such as fall
 At the returning light of blessed feet
 Should be refreshing and divine as morn.

Thetis. Support me, O support me in thy arms
 Once more, once only. Lower not thy cheek
 In sadness ; let me look into thine eyes ;
 Tho' the heavens frown on us, they, now serene,
 Threaten us no fresh sorrow . . . *us ?* ah me !
 The word of Zeus is spoken : our Achilles
 Discovered, borne away in the Argive ships
 To Aulis, froward youth ! his fearless heart
 Had bounded faster than those ships to Troy.
 Ah ! surely there are some among the Gods
 Or Goddesses who might have, knowing all,
 Forewarn'd thee.

Were there neither auguries
 Nor dreams to shake off thy security,
 No priest to prophesy, no soothsayer ?
 And yet what pastures are more plentiful
 Than round Larissa ? victims where more stately ?
 Come, touch the altar with me.

Pious man,
 Doth not thy finger even now impress
 The embers of an incense often burnt
 For him, for thee ?

The lowing of the herds
 Are audible, whose leaders lead them forth
 For sacrifice from where Apidanos
 Rises, to where Enipeus widens, lost
 In the sea-beach : and these may yet avail.

Peleus. Alas ! alas ! priests may foretell calamity
 But not avert it : all that they can give
 Are threats and promises and hopes and fears.
 Despond not, long-lost Thetis ! hath no God
 Now sent thee back to me ? why not believe
 He will preserve our son ? which of them all
 Hath he offended ?

Thetis. Yet uncertainties,
 Worse than uncertainties, oppress my heart,
 And overwhelm me.

Peleus. Thetis ! in the midst

Of all uncertainties some comfort lies,
 Save those which even perplex the Gods on high
 And which confound men the most godlike . . . love,
 Despond not so. Long may Achilles live
 Past our old-age . . . *ours* ? had I then forgot,
 Dazed by thy beauty, thy divinity ?

Thetis. Immortal is thy love, immutable.

Peleus. Time without grief might not have greatly changed
 me.

Thetis. There is a loveliness which wants not youth,
 And which the Gods may want, and sometimes do.
 The soft voice of compassion is unheard
 Above ; no shell of ocean is attuned
 To that voice there ; no tear hath ever dropt
 Upon Olympos.

Fondly now as ever
 Thou lookest, but more pensively ; hath grief
 Done this, and grief alone ? tell me at once,
 Say have no freshly fond anxieties . . .

Peleus. Smile thus, smile thus anew. Ages shall fly
 Over my tomb while thou art flourishing
 In youth eternal, the desire of Gods,
 The light of Ocean to its lowest deep,
 The inspirer and sustainer here on earth
 Of ever-flowing song.

Thetis. I bless thy words
 And in my heart will hold them ; Gods who see
 Within it may desire me, but they know
 I have loved *Peleus*. When we were so happy
 They parted us, and, more unmerciful,
 Again unite us in eternal woe.

Peleus. Powerfuller than the elements their will,
 And swifter than the light, they may relent,
 For they are mutable, and thou mayst see
 Achilles every day and every hour.

Thetis. Alas ! how few ! . . . I see him in the dust,
 In agony, in death, I see his blood
 Along the flints, his yellow hair I see
 Darken'd, and flapping a red stream, his hand
 Unable to remove it from the eyes.
 I hear his voice . . . his voice that calls on *me*.
 I could not save him ; and he would have left
 The grotts of *Nereus*, would have left the groves
 And meadows of *Elysium*, bent on war.

Peleus. Yet Mars may spare him. Troy hath once been won.

Thetis. Perish he must, perish at Troy, and now.

Peleus. The *now* of Gods is more than life's duration ;
 Other Gods, other worlds, are form'd within it.
 If he indeed must perish, and at Troy,
 His ashes will lie softly upon hers,
 Thus fall our beauteous boy, thus fall Achilles.
 Songs such as Keiron's harp could never reach
 Shall sound his praises, and his spear shall shine
 Over far lands, when even our Gods are mute.

Thetis. Over his head nine years had not yet past
 When in the halls of Tethys these were words
 Reiterated oftenest . . . *O thou brave*
Golden-hair'd son of Peleus ! What a heap
 Of shells were broken by impatient Nymphs
 Because of hoarseness rendering them unfit
 For their high symphonies ! and what reproofs
 Against some Tritons from their brotherhood
 For breaking by too loud a blast the slumber
 Of those who, thinking of him, never slept.
 To me appear'd the first light of his eyes,
 The dayspring of the world ; such eyes were thine
 At our first meeting on the warm sea-shore.

Why should youth linger with me ? why not come
 Age, and then death ? The beast of Kalydon
 Made his impetuous rush against this arm
 No longer fit for war nor for defence
 Of thy own people ; is the day come too
 When it no longer can sustain thy Thetis ?
 Pretend it not toward the skies, invoke not,
 Name not, a Deity ; I dread them all.
 No ; lift me not above thy head, in vain
 Reproving them with such an awful look,
 A look of beauty which they will not pity,
 And of reproaches which they may not brook.

Peleus. Doth not my hand now, Thetis, clasp that foot
 Which seen the Powers of ocean cease to rage,
 Indignant when the brood of *Æolos*
 Disturbs their rest ? If that refreshing breath
 Which now comes over my unquiet head
 Be not the breath of immortality,
 If Zeus hath any thunderbolt for it,
 Let this, beloved Thetis, be the hour !

THE ESPOUSALS OF POLYXENA.

“**THY** blood, O pious maiden ! shall remain
In thy own city ; and thou shalt survive
Its foe who now espouses thee.”

The song
Of the three Sisters in three voices sang
These words, so comforting a mother’s heart
To her Polyxena ; and from the shrine
Of Thymbra, from Apollo’s mouth the same
When she had led her thither.

“**Future days**
Of peace and happiness,” said she, “**expand**
Before thee, and thou seest them not, O child !
Pious, yet even by that God’s voice unmoved.
Behold ! how bright the sky ! how sweet the air
Breathes round about us ! sweet when we came forth,
But how much balmier now ! the flowers arise
Under the spring’s first dust, as if no foot
Of foe had trampled them, and sip the dew
Joyous as if they felt thy wedding-day.
Continuous heaps extend along the plain,
Heaps where one briar binds more than one below,
Foes lately, now united evermore.”

“**I see the flowers, I see the sepulchres**”
Polyxena said sighing, “**and I feel**
The breeze, no balmier than it breath’d before :
That tepid moisture which the plants inhale
Was theirs ; and ah ! those flowers were Trojan blood.
Not other now shines forth thy light, O sun,
Than when the Achaian anchors graspt our strand
Amid the clamour of the host, amid
Cars rattling on the stony beach, and shields
Struck in defiance. Ah ! nor otherwise
When every God left Hector.”

Here she wept,
Here wept the mother too.

“**But why thus break**
Silence, if only to make way for grief ?
I had ceast almost so deeply to bemoan
My children when Achilles was defence,
Not terror, to us all. Canst thou refuse
To see the Gods now with him, friends to Troy ?
King above kings, rich with ancestral stores,
And now about to bring all Asia bound

Into Mycenai, and, despite of Mars,
 Polyxena, thee now doth he prefer
 To all these glories : ere they yet were won,
 Iphigeneia never had declined
 His proffer'd hand while yet his shield was white,
 Nor had the Nereid, she from whom he sprang,
 Brought the Vulcanian armour he now bears.
 Him born of Gods and worthy to beget
 Their semblances, rejectest thou ? She shed
 Her blood upon the altar that thy hand
 Might rescue Troy. Thou fearest the wild wail
 Of our Cassandra ; if there must be fear,
 Is not Achilles what thou mightest dread ? ”

Briefly the yielding daughter thus replied.
 “ Whether the Gods command me, as they do,
 To wed, or whether to be bound a slave,
 I follow the behest : where no disgrace
 No hardship is . . . but let me weep awhile.
 I will, O mother ! yes, I will obey
 A parent . . . for this also they command,
 Hoping they may recall or may remit
 This one decree. Must I be given up
 To him behind whose wheels my brother's corse
 Was drag'd along, drag'd while his breast yet heaved
 And plowed and fill'd the furrow with his blood.
 Oh ! on this very ground our feet now press
 Plighted are nuptial vows ! are Gods invoked !
 Thanksgivings offered them ! Oh ! pardon grief
 That nothing can abate : what can the Gods
 Do now to lighten it ?

Ye mounding heaps
 Which friendly hands heapt up and covered o'er
 With turf, not solid yet ; where cypresses,
 Green lately, drop their hard and withered leaves ;
 And ye that cover corsees numberless
 In happier union, ye but separate
 The resting soul from soul that knows not rest.
 I gave my promise ; thus Apollo will'd ;
 Let then his oracles, by me observ'd,
 Bring (to me never !) to my country peace.”

Hecuba gaspt for breath, tears gushing down,
 “ O my last child ! my only hope in life !
 Cried she, “ unmerited unhoped-for weal
 Restorest thou : not what thy terror feigns
 Wilt thou soon find him : his stern heart relents
 At Priam's sad reverses ; he beholds

A house the Gods have visited and deign'd
 To share its hospitality ; he looks
 With pity and with fondness on thy youth
 And beauty ; else he never would hold out
 His hand in amity, nor blandly take
 What he could tear away : beside, he fears
 That thou, beyond the reach of his revenge
 (Unlike Briséis whom his sword reclaim'd)
 Shouldst be by equal lot another's prey.
 For long ago he saw our certain fate,
 Deriding the Palladion, nor afraid
 Of any Gods, when Gods saw Hector fall."
 Another, not a happier, morn arose.

Under the walls of Dardanos a plain
 Lies open : it was covered now with crowds
 Even to the root of Ida, past the banks
 Of those two stony rivers, since alike
 Rendered immortal by immortal song.
 Unwearied, tho' grown hoary under arms,
 And from the omen fondly hoping peace,
 Commingled with the Trojans, in the fane
 Of their Apollo, the Achaians held
 Stern silence, or in whispers a discourse
 That varied. Some regretted the delay
 Of the doom'd city ; some dared blame the king,
 And some Peleides ; others muttered words
 On treachery, then on bribes, and knew the tent
 That covered them stow'd carefully from sight.

Hither came Priam ; slower came behind
 His aged consort, and her sons, now few ;
 Prodigal had the rest been of their blood.
 The wives of the survivors hither came,
 All deeply veil'd and all with brow abased.
 Hither they once had come led joyfully
 Mid hymeneal song, by hands now cold :
 Alone at home remain'd, and tried to wear
 Away with restless spindle the sad hour,
 Andromache, oft chided by her child.

In every street of the wide city, throngs
 Rusht forth impatiently to see the shields
 So long opposed to them, and helmets caught
 Before by glimpses only thro' the dust.

Close to the altar of the placid God
 Polyxena held tightly by the arm
 Achilles, and scarce knew it ; beautiful
 Above her sister, beautiful almost

As Helena herself ; so white that brow,
 So pure the lustre of those gentle eyes.
 Cassandra suddenly with horrid scream
 Rushes beyond the congregated host . .
 All tremble, all are stricken mute, as when
 Enters some Deity. She speaks, alone,
 And not her words speaks she, but words compell'd.
 "Sister, believest thou the Destinies
 Are friendly to thee? Sister! turn thine eyes
 Back from this temple, turn them on the walls
 Poseidon aided by Apollo rais'd.
 In vain hath Pallas dwelt within . . I see
 Prodigies, I see arms and flames o'er-ride
 The ancient towers ; Xanthos and Simoeis
 I see run swifter now with streams of blood,
 And heroes rising heavily from wounds,
 And ruin following when the battles cease.
 O flower! upon what altar art thou laid,
 Cull'd by Thessalian hand! why, ere the torch
 Be lighted, flames so the Sigæan shore
 And Tenedos the level ray prolongs?
 Fly! let us fly! Citheron calls aloud ;
 Sound the Chaonian towers, resound the horns
 Of Achelöos, and, high up above,
 The thunder-rent Keraunian rocks reply.
 Hearest thou not the marble manger crack
 Under the monster's jaw? it scales our walls
 And human voices issue from its hulk?
 Why then delay? why idle words? Arise
 My parents! . . turn, ah! turn away the sight
 From those Bistonian, those betraying realms.
 Why, Polydoros, callest thou? why waves
 A barren cornel o'er a recent tomb
 While the loose pebbles tinkle down the base?
 Me neither tears nor madness are vouchsafed;
 Do thou, devoted sister! now thy chains
 Are taken off that thy pure blood may flow
 More readily, step back one little step
 From where thou sittest on the fagot; come
 And give me, all I hope, one last embrace.
 Oh spare her thou! And thee too I implore,
 Pyrrhos! Oh, by the manes of thy sire!
 Haste forward. She deserves it not, no crime
 Is hers. This only my last breath implores."
 Uttering such words her maidens drew her home.
 Another noise was heard within the fane.

Silent and dark an arrow from across
 Amid the tumult struck the hero's heel,
 And, passing thro' and thro', the brazen point
 Rang on the marble floor. The chiefs around
 Wonder to see the weapon and small bead
 Of blood: they seize their spears, and tear away
 The olive and verbena from their crests
 And stamp them underfoot: not Priam's voice
 Was heard, who gathering dust with desperate grasp
 Strew'd with it his grey hairs; nor was the bride
 Heeded, tho' sinking as if into death.
 Achilles neither helpt her nor required
 Help for himself; aware the day was come,
 Foretold him: he with failing voice repress
 The wrath of his compeers, yet strong enough
 Thus to command.

“ Lay ye your arms aside;

Let none avenge Achilles but his son.
 Alkimos and Automedon! detain
 Within our tent the Myrmidons: my voice
 They might no longer mind who see me now,
 Fallen ignobly . . Ajax! Diomed!
 Leave here a corse not worth a beast alive,
 Or hide it where no Trojan may rejoice.
 Ah! must his herds then graze upon my grave!

Let not thy tears drop over me, whoe'er
 Thou art upon my left! my eyes of iron
 See none, see nothing . . take those friendly arms
 From off my shoulder . . they now weary me
 And weary you with their too vain support.
 Not that Larissa in a quiet tomb
 Holds my brave ancestors grieve I, O Death,
 Not that my mother will lament my loss,
 Lone in the bower of Tethys, for a while;
 I grieve that Troy should ever thus exult
 Without more slaughter of her faithless race.
 Open the turf, remove the blackened boughs,
 And let the urn of Menætiades
 Take my bones too.

Launch from this hateful strand

The bark that bore us hither.

With the leave

Of your Atreides . . send for . . now at play
 In Ptheiai, and expecting the return
 Of playmate . . my own Pyrrhos, my brave boy . .
 To bring destruction with the Pelian spear.

Hear ye my voice? or with its pants and gasps
Expires it, and deceives me?

I forget . . .

Such is the mist of mind that hangs on me . . .
What are the orders I have given, and what
My wishes yet unspoken: be not ye
Forgetful of me as I am of these;
Sure, although Orcos drags my wounded limbs
Beneath, the Shades shall know and fear me there.

Pyrrhos! my child, my far-off child, farewell!
Whose care shall train thy youth? What Keiron stoop
To teach thee wisdom? what parental hands
Be loud in the applauses thou shalt win
For lyre, for javelin, for Thessalian car
Seen above others in the foremost dust."

DEATH OF PARIS AND CENONE.

Closed had the darkened day of Corythos.

When Agelaos heard the first report,
Curses he uttered on the stepmother,
Fewer on Paris by her spells enthrall'd,
For in the man he now but saw the child,
Ingenuous, unsuspecting. He resolved
To hasten back to Ida, praying death
To come and intercept him on the way.
What tale to tell Cenone! and what thanks
From parent at a prosperous son's return,
Anxiously hoped for after many years,
Last gift of wife deserted, now deprived
Of him whose voice, whose gesture, day and night
Brought the beloved betrayer back again
Into her closing and unclosing eyes,
And sometimes with her child upon the knee
Of her who knew him not, nor cared to know.
Grief and indignant virtue wrung her breast
When she repeated to the fond old man
Such intermingled and such transient joys;
But when she met him on his sad return
Ida was hateful in her eyes, for there
Love bore such bitter and such deadly fruit.

When Paris knew the truth, on cheek supine

And cold a thousand kisses he imprest,
 Weeping and wailing ; he would expiate
 (If expiation there might ever be)
 The murderous deed : he built up high a pyre
 Of fragrant cedar, and in broken voice
 Call'd on the name, a name he knew so late.
 " O Corythos ! my son ! my son ! " he cried,
 And smote his breast and turn'd his eyes away ;
 Grief wrencht him back, grief that impell'd him on,
 But soon return'd he, resolute to catch
 The fleeting ashes and o'ertake the winds ;
 So from the brittle brands he swept away
 The whiter ashes, placed them in their urn,
 And went back slowly, often went alone
 In the still night beneath the stars that shed
 Light on a turf not solid yet, above
 The priceless treasure there deposited.
 Achaians, wandering on the shore, observ'd
 His movements thither, Laertiades,
 Epeos, and that hero last arrived,
 Pæantios, catching the cool air with gasps.
 There rose the foss before them : they advanced
 From the Sigæan side thro' copse and brake
 Along the winding dell of darker shade,
 Awaiting Paris.

Under a loose string
 Rattles a quiver ; and invisibly
 Hath flown an arrow, and a shout succeeds :
 No voices answer it. One listens, groans,
 Calls for his foe ; but calls not any God's
 Or any mortal's aid ; he raves, and rests
 Upon his elbow. Back thro' the soft sands
 They from their ambush hasten, for no shield,
 No helmet had they taken, no defence.
 Below his knee the arrow has transfixt
 The pulp, and hindered all pursuit ; in vain
 Strove he to tear it out ; his vigorous arm
 Could only break the arrow ; blood flow'd hot
 Where he would wrench it.

All night thro', he roll'd
 His heavy eyes ; he saw the lamps succeed
 Each other in the city far below,
 He saw them in succession dim and die.
 In the fresh morn, when iron light awakes
 The gentle cattle from their brief repose,
 His menials issue thro' the nearer fields

And groves adjacent to explore their lord,
 And lastly (where perchance he might be found)
 Nearer the pointed barrow of his son.
 Thither ran forward that true-hearted race
 Which cheers the early morn, and shakes the frost
 From stiffened herbs, which lies before the gate
 Alike of rich and poor, but faithful most
 To the forsaken and afflicted, came
 And howl'd and croucht and lickt their master's face,
 And now unchided mixt their breath with his.

When man's last day is come, how clear are all
 The former ones! Now appear manifest
 Neglected Gods, now Sparta's Furies rise,
 Now flames the fatal torch of Hecuba
 Portended at his birth, but deem'd extinct
 Until that arrow sped across the tombs
 Of heroes, by a hand unseen, involves
 In flame and smoke the loftiest tower of Troy.
 Such were the thoughts that vanisht like a mist,
 And thee, Cenone, thee alone he sees,
 He sees thee under where the grot was strown
 With the last winter leaves, a couch for each,
 Sees thee betroht, deserted, desolate,
 Childless . . . how lately not so! what avail
 The promises of Gods? false! false as mine!
 "Seek out, ye trusty men, seek out," said he,
 "The Nymph Cenone: tell her that I lie
 Wounded to death: tell her that I implore
 Her pardon, not her aid."

They, when they reacht
 High up the hill the woodland's last recess,
 And saw her habitation, saw the door
 Closed, and advancing heard deep groans, which brought
 Even to the sill her favourite doe and stag
 Springing before them with defiant breasts,
 They paus'd; they entered; few and slow the words
 They brought with them, the last they heard him speak.
 Briefly she answered with her face aside.

"I could not save my child; one who could save
 Would not."

Thick sobs succeeded.

'Twas not long
 Ere down the narrow and steep path are heard
 The pebbles rattling under peasants' feet,
 Whose faces the dense shrubs at every side
 Smite as they carry on his bier the man

Who thinks his journey long ; 'twas long to him
 Wounded so grievously, to him about
 To close his waning day, before his eyes
 Might rest on hers and mix with hers his tears.
 How shall he meet her ?

Where the rocks were clear
 Of ivy, more than once the trace is seen
 Of name or verse, the hunter's idle score
 Indifferent to pursue the chase ; and where
 There was a leveler and wider track
 He might remember, if indeed he cared
 For such remembrances, the scene of games
 At quoit or cestus closed by dance and feast.
 He drew both hands before his face, and wept,
 And those who carried him, and found him faint
 And weary, placed their burden on the ground,
 And with averted faces they wept too.

Cenone came not out ; her feet were fixt
 Upon the threshold at the opened door,
 Her head turn'd inward that her tears might fall
 Unseen by stranger ; but not long unseen
 By Paris : he was in his youth's domains,
 He view'd his earliest home, his earliest loves,
 And heard again his earliest sighs, and hers.

"After how many and what years !" he cried,
 "Return I, O Cenone ! thus to thee !"

She answered not ; no anger, no reproach ;
 For, hours before, she prayed the Eumenides
 That they would, as befits the just, avenge
 The murder of her Corythos ; she prayed
 That she might never have the power to help
 The cruel father in the hour of need.

A voice now tells her from her inmost heart,
 Voice never, to the listener, indistinct,
 It is not granted to so wild a prayer.

Weary of light and life, again she prayed.

"Grant me, O Zeus ! what thou alone canst grant.
 Is death too great a boon ? too much for me,
 A wretched Nymph, to ask ? bestow it now."

When she had spoken, on the left was heard
 Thunder, and there shone flame from sky serene ;
 Now on her child and father of her child
 Equally sad and tender were her thoughts ;
 She saw them both in one, and wept the more.
 Heedless and heartless wretch she call'd herself,
 But her whole life, now most, those words belied.

Paris had heard the words. "Those words were mine
 Could I have uttered them : wounds make men weak,
 Shame makes them weaker : neither knowest thou,
 Pure soul ! one fit for immortality !
 Let us, Cenone, shouldst thou ever die,
 Be here united, here is room for both . .
 Both did I say ? and not for one beside ?
 Oh ! will his ashes ever rest near mine ?"
 To these few words he added these few more.
 "Restrain, Cenone, those heartrending sobs !"
 His he could not restrain, nor deeper groans,
 Yet struggled to console her. "Are not these
 Our true espousals ? Many may have loved
 But few have died together !" Then she shriekt
 "Let me die first, O husband ! Hear my prayer
 Tho' the Gods have not heard it ! one embrace !
 Paris is mine at last ; eternally
 Paris is mine.

Oh do not thou, my child,
 Shun or disdain amid the Shades below
 Those who now die, and would have died for thee !

The gift of Venus I have often mourn'd,
 With this one consolation, that my grief
 Could not increase : such consolation lasts
 No longer : punishment far less severe
 Could Heré or could Pallas have decreed
 Than Venus on this Ida, where she won
 A prize so fatal, and to more than me."

The maidens of the mountain came and rais'd
 Her drooping head, and drew from tepid springs
 The water of her grot, and, from above,
 Cedar and pine of tender spray, and call'd
 Her father Cebren : he came forth, and fill'd
 After due sacrifice the larger space
 That was remaining of the recent urn.

Paris had given his faithful friends command,
 Whether the Fates might call him soon or late,
 That, if were found some ashes on his breast,
 Those to the bones they covered be restored.

MENE LAUS AND HELEN AT TROY.

An old attendant deprecates and intercepts his vengeance.

Menelaus. Out of my way! Off! or my sword may smite thee,

Heedless of venerable age. And thou,
Fugitive! stop. Stand, traitress, on that stair . .
Thou mountest not another, by the Gods!
Now take the death thou meritest, the death
Zeus who presides o'er hospitality,
And every other god whom thou hast left,
And every other who abandons thee
In this accursed city, sends at last.
Turn, vilest of vile slaves! turn, paramour
Of what all other women hate, of cowards,
Turn, lest this hand wrench back thy head, and toss
It and its odours to the dust and flames.

Helen. Welcome the death thou promisest! Not fear
But shame, obedience, duty, make me turn.

Menelaus. Duty! false harlot!

Helen. Name too true! severe

Precursor to the blow that is to fall,
It should alone suffice for killing me.

Menelaus. Ay, weep: be not the only one in Troy
Who wails not on this day . . its last . . the day
Thou and thy crimes darken with dead on dead.

Helen. Spare! spare! O let the last that falls be me!
There are but young and old.

Menelaus. There are but guilty
Where thou art, and the sword strikes none amiss.
Hearest thou not the creeping blood buzz near
Like flies? or wouldst thou rather hear it hiss
Louder, against the flaming roofs thrown down
Wherewith the streets are pathless? Ay, but vengeance
Springs over all; and Nemesis and Atè
Drove back the flying ashes with both hands.
I never saw thee weep till now: and now
There is no pity in thy tears. The tiger
Leaves not her young athirst for the first milk,
As thou didst. Thine could scarce have claspt thy knee
If she had felt thee leave her.

Helen. O my child!
My only one! thou livest: 'tis enough;
Hate me, abhor me, curse me . . these are duties . .

Call me but Mother in the shades of death !
 She now is twelve years old, when the bud swells
 And the first colours of uncertain life
 Begin to tinge it.

Menelaus (aside). Can she think of home ?
 Hers once, mine yet, and sweet Hermione's !
 Is there one spark that cheer'd my hearth, one left,
 For thee, my last of love !

Scorn, righteous scorn
 Blows it from me . . . but thou mayst . . . never, never.
 Thou shalt not see her even there. The slave
 On earth shall scorn thee, and the damn'd below.

Helen. Delay not either fate. If death is mercy,
 Send me among the captives ; so that Zeus
 May see his offspring led in chains away,
 And thy hard brother, pointing with his sword
 At the last wretch that crouches on the shore,
 Cry, " She alone shall never sail for Greece ! "

Menelaus. Hast thou more words ?

Her voice is musical

As the young maids who sing to Artemis :
 How glossy is that yellow braid my grasp
 Seiz'd and let loose ! Ah ! can then years have past
 Since but the children of the Gods, like them,
 Suffer not age.

Helen ! speak honestly,
 And thus escape my vengeance . . . was it force
 That bore thee off ?

Helen. It was some evil God.

Menelaus. Helping that hated man ?

Helen.

How justly hated !

Menelaus. By thee too ?

Helen.

Hath he not made *thee* unhappy ?

O do not strike.

Menelaus. Wretch !

Helen.

Strike, but do not speak.

Menelaus. Lest thou remember me against thy will.

Helen. Lest I look up and see you wroth and sad,
 Against my will ; O ! how against my will
 They know above, they who perhaps can pity.

Menelaus. They shall not save thee.

Helen.

Then indeed they pity.

Menelaus. Prepare for death.

Helen.

Not from that hand : 'twould

pain you.

Menelaus. Touch not my hand. Easily dost thou drop it !

Helen. Easy are all things, do but thou command.

Menelaus. Look up then.

Helen. To the hardest proof of all
I am now bidden : bid me not look up.

Menelaus. She looks as when I led her on behind
The torch and fife, and when the blush o'erspread
Her girlish face at tripping in the myrtle
On the first step before the wreathed gate.
Approach me. Fall not on thy knees.

Helen. The hand
That is to slay me, best may slay me thus.
I dare no longer see the light of heaven,
Nor thine . . . alas ! the light of heaven to me.

Menelaus. Follow me.

She holds out both arms . . . and now
Drops them again . . . She comes . . . Why stoppest thou ?

Helen. O Menelaus ! could thy heart know mine,
As once it did . . . for then did they converse,
Generous the one, the other not unworthy . . .
Thou wouldst find sorrow deeper even than guilt.

Menelaus. And must I lead her by the hand again ?
Nought shall persuade me. Never. She draws back . . .
The true alone and loving sob like her.

Come, Helen !

[*He takes her hand.*]

Helen. Oh ! let never Greek see this !
Hide me from Argos, from Amyclai hide me,
Hide me from all.

Menelaus. Thy anguish is too strong
For me to strive with.

Helen. Leave it all to me.

Menelaus. Peace ! peace ! The wind, I hope, is fair for
Sparta.

HERCULES, PLUTO, ALCESTIS, ADMETOS.

Hercules. Weepst thou ? Weep thou mayst ; but not for
long.

Alcestis. Certainly not for long, O Heracles !
So let me weep : this day, if not this night,
Will join me to Admetos.

Hercules. Say, what voice
Hath told thee so ?

Alcestis. The voice within my breast.

Hercules. It shall be true as was thy heart to him . . .

Alcestis. Who now lies without hope for one hour more
Upon this earth.

Hercules. No power have I o'er fate.

Alcestis. Thou canst not, I can, save him.

Hercules.

Tell me how.

Alcestis. I dare not utter my design to thee,
For vows are sacred, so conditions are,
And both are, or will soon be, ratified.
The God who rules below will cast him down
Before my steps can reach those horrid realms,
If those are horrid where the faithful meet
To love eternally.

Hercules. But wouldst thou not
Rather return with him to the early scenes
Of your betrothal, of your happier hours?

Alcestis. Alas! alas! not Hades, not Elysion,
Not heaven itself, could ever soothe my soul
As those have done . . . but when he goes I go . . .
O could it but be first!

Hercules. The Gods may grant
This wish at thy entreaty.

Alcestis. They have heard
Already every prayer my heart could frame.

Hercules. On me they have bestow'd some power to calm
Thy breast, Alcestis!

Alcestis. Save with his, mine never.

Hercules. Be calmer, cheer thee. Every God above
Hath been propitious to me; he below
Shall hear me: not another day shall see
Such faithful hearts apart.

Alcestis. No word of thine
Was ever false, but how can this be true?

Hercules. Question me not.

I have been told ere now
That heavy grief brings also heavy sleep,
Lighter be thine! but confidently close
Those eyes half-closed already by the weight
That overhangs them.

Alcestis. Can I? Do I dream?

Hercules. No, but thou shalt when Love hath had his way.

Pluto. Who comes among the Shades and is no Shade?

Hercules. Thy elder brother's offspring, Heracles.

Pluto. And sent thee hither he?

Hercules.

His will it was.

Pluto. And what thy errand?

Hercules.

Rescue.

Pluto.

Rescue hence ?

There never was, nor shall be.

Hercules.

Say not so,

Brother of him the mighty and the just.

Pluto. Just callest thou the brother who usurpt

His father's throne, and thrust these realms on me ?

Peopled are mine, 'tis true, far more than his

Or than Poseidon's, with his singing Nymphs

And blowing Tritons in loud choruses

On conchs, and songless speechless multitudes ;

Callest thou him the just ? mighty he may be

On earth, or over earth, but never here.

And thou, who art but mortal, darest come

Invader, to my very throne !

Hercules.

I came

Speedily as I could, but was outrun

By one who hurried to recall from hence

Him whom ere this she haply hath embraced,

Admetos ; her own life she gives for his ;

And this condition every God approves.

Pluto. Every ? and am not I one ? My consent

Neither those gods nor thou shalt gain. Return . .

For what is she to thee, audacious man ?

Hercules. Alcestis is the daughter of my friend.

Pluto. If truth has reacht me here (and oftener truth

Is found below than among those on earth)

Many have been the daughters thou hast there

Rescued from spousal and parental bonds.

Hercules. I bear no shaft of wit so keen as thine,

Nor would confront thee : only give me up

The virtuous bride, then will I reascend.

Pluto. What if thy calculation be amiss.

The bride I give not up : thou mayest go,

With my goodwill, but must leave her behind.

Hercules. I would not wrestle with thee.

Pluto.

Art thou mad ?

Wrestle with an Immortal !

Hercules.

If compell'd,

And grow myself Immortal by that strife.

Pluto. Cerberos ! seize him.

Hercules.

'Twas not long ago

He lickt the instep of Eurydice

And only growl'd at her deliverer.

Brave dogs are fellow-creatures of brave men,

Not one of his three heads would bark at me.

Pluto (*ALCESTIS rushing forward*). Woman! whence comest?
whither rushest thou?

Alcestis (*not minding him*). O Heracles! and art thou also
doom'd

To bless earth never more?

Hercules. To bless once more

Earth with thy presence come I, nor will go
Until I lead thee back.

Pluto. Styx! Phlegethon!

Surround him.

Hercules. I will cast thee into them,

God as thou art, if any hurt befalls

Alcestis.

Alcestis. Leave me, leave me, Heracles!

Never from my Admetos will I part.

Persephone (*entering*). Nor shalt thou.

Pluto. And thou, too, refractory?

Even thou, Persephone!

Persephone. Thou once didst love me,

O Pluto! love me now; remit, remit

Thy rigid laws . . . give me these two. Advance,

Admetos! (*whispers*).

He may change his mind . . . go, go.

Admetos (*ascending*). I feel afresh the air of heaven; thy kiss
Breath'd it, and do my steps touch earth again?

Hercules. Yea, firm as mine do.

But thou still art faint,

Alcestis! If my shoulder is too high
For thee to lean on, let this arm help his.

I had no time or thought to look beyond,

And I saw nothing of Elysian fields;

If there be any thou shalt find them all

Among those pastures where Apollo fed

Thy herds, Admetos! where another God

(Thou knowest who) Alcestis! drew thee forth

And placed thee on that fond and faithful breast

Whereon thou, undivided, shalt repose.

Alcestis. Shall we be never, never, parted more?

Admetos. Let us, my own Alcestis, leave behind

(Since one day both must die) a proof that love

May be as happy, if as true, as thine.

Age is before us, be it long before,

And Death not wait for either!

Hercules. Haste ye home,

And there hold fitter than such grave discourse.

Remember, Hymen is come back again

And follows close, for Hymen hates delay.
 Admetos! I was fancying that thy brood
 Of gallant coursers, boast of Thessaly,
 Will not awaken you to-morrow-morn,
 With all their neighings at the palace-gate,
 To greet ye coming safe and sound again.
 Let me forbid the maidens to entwine,
 Whatever they may gather in the dew,
 Flowers till past noontide: they are ever apt
 To speed on such occasions, and to break
 The spell descending from the silent moon,
 A spell which binds together strong and weak.
 They shall sing merrily for honied cates,
 A guerdon and a symbol not unmeet:
 I too would sing among them, but no song
 Could Orpheus teach me, nor would let me touch
 His harp; my fingers, said he, were unfit;
 Nor was my voice melodious, tho' less harsh
 Than when ye heard it in yon place below.

Chorus of Matrons at Morning.

Come, little girls who catch the laughter
 And know not what the laughter means,
 But who shall know it well hereafter
 Amid less grand and gaudy scenes.

Come, maidens, ye almost as young,
 Ye too whose cheeks are full in bloom,
 Lay by your wreathes, and sing a song
 To her whose love hath burst the tomb.

Then to the praises of the bold,
 Then of the tender and the true,
 A pair whom Hades could not hold . . .
 And may such heroes wed with you!

Girls' Reply.

We are too young to think of men,
 Few of us yet are seventeen;
 Better to trim the wreath, and then
 To look and see how looks the queen.

HOMER, LAERTES, AGATHA.

FIRST DAY.

Homer. Is this Laertes who embraces me
Ere a word spoken? his the hand I grasp?

Laertes. Zeus help thee, and restore to thee thy sight,
My guest of old! I am of years as many,
And of calamities, as thou thyself,
I, wretched man! who have outlived my son
Odysseus, him thou knewest in this house,
A stripling fond of quoits and archery,
Thence to be call'd for counsel mid the chiefs
Who storm'd that city past the farther sea,
Built by two Gods, by more than two defended.

Homer. He rests, and to the many toils endur'd
There was not added the worse weight of age.

Laertes. He would be growing old had he remain'd
Until this day, tho' scarcely three-score years
Had he completed; old I seem'd to him
For youth is fanciful, yet here am I,
Stout, a full twenty summers after him:
But one of the three sisters snapt that thread
Which was the shortest, and my boy went down
When no light shines upon the dreary way.

Homer. Hither I came to visit thee, and sing
His wanderings and his wisdom, tho' my voice
Be not the voice it was; yet thoughts come up,
And words to thoughts, which others may recite
When I am mute, and deaf as in my grave,
If any grave in any land be mine.

Laertes. Men will contend for it in after times,
And cities claim it as the ground whereon
A temple stood, and worshippers yet stand.
Long hast thou travell'd since we met, and far.

Homer. I have seen many cities, and the best
And wisest of the men who dwelt therein,
The children and *their* children now adult,
Nor childless they. Some have I chided, some
Would soothe, who, mounted on the higher sod,
Wept as the pebbles tinkled, dropping o'er
A form outstretcht below; they would not hear
Story of mine, which told them there were fields
Fresher, and brighter skies, but slapping me,
Cried worse, and ran away.

Laertes. Here sits aside thee

A child grey-headed who will hear thee out.
 Here shalt thou arm my son again, in mail
 No enemy, no time, can strip from him,
 But first I counsel thee to try the strength
 Of my old prisoner in the cave below :
 The wine will sparkle at the sight of thee,
 If there be any virtue left in it.
 Bread there is, fitter for young teeth than ours,
 But wine can soften its obduracy.
 At hand is honey in the honeycomb,
 And melon, and those blushing pouting buds
 That fain would hide them under crisped leaves.
 Soon the blue dove and particolor'd hen
 Shall quit the stable-rafter, caught at roost,
 And goat shall miss her suckling in the morn ;
 Supper will want them ere the day decline.

Homer. So be it : I sing best when hearty cheer
 Refreshes me, and hearty friend beside.

Laertes. Voyagers, who have heard thee, carried home
 Strange stories ; whether all be thy device
 I know not : surely thou hadst been afraid
 Some God or Goddess would have twicht thine ear.

Homer. They often came about me while I slept,
 And brought me dreams, and never lookt morose.
 They loved thy son and for his sake loved me.

Laertes. Apollo, I well know, was much thy friend.

Homer. He never harried me as Marsyas
 Was harried by him ; lest he should, I sang
 His praise in my best hymn : the Gods love praise.

Laertes. I should have thought the Gods would more
 approve
 Good works than glossy words, for well they know
 All we can tell them of themselves or us.
 Have they enrich thee ? for I see thy cloak
 Is ragged.

Homer. Ragged cloak is songster's garb.

Laertes. I have two better ; one of them for thee.
 Penelope, who died five years ago,
 Spun it ; her husband wore it only once,
 And 'twas upon the anniversary
 Of their espousal.

Homer. Wear it I will not,
 But I will hang it on the brightest nail
 Of the first temple where Apollo sits,
 Golden hair'd, in his glory.

Laertes. So thou shalt

If so it please thee: yet we first will quaff
 The gifts of Bakkos, for methinks his gifts
 Are quite as welcome to the sons of song
 And cheer them oftener.

[AGATHA enters with a cup of wine.]

Maiden! come thou nigh,
 And seat thee there, and thou shalt hear him sing,
 After a while, what Gods might listen to:
 But place that cup upon the board, and wait
 Until the stranger hath assuaged his thirst,
 For songmen, grasshoppers, and nightingales
 Sing cheerily but when the throat is moist.

Homēr. I sang to maidens in my prime; again,
 But not before the morrow, will I sing;
 Let me repose this noontide, since in sooth
 Wine, a sweet solacer of weariness,
 Helps to unload the burden.

Laertes. Lie then down
 Along yon mat bestrown with rosemary,
 Basil, and mint, and thyme.

She knows them all
 And has her names for them, some strange enough.
 Sound and refreshing then be thy repose!
 Well may weak mortal seek the balm of sleep
 When even the Gods require it, when the stars
 Droop in their courses, and the Sun himself
 Sinks on the swelling bosom of the sea.

Take heed there be no knot on any sprig;
 After, bring store of rushes and long leaves
 Of cane sweet-smelling from the inland bank
 Of yon wide-wandering river over-sea
 Famed for its swans; then open and take out
 From the black chest the linen, never used
 These many years, which thou (or one before)
 Spreadst for the Sun to bleach it; and be sure,
 Be sure, thou smoothen with both hands his couch
 Who has the power to make both young and old
 Live throughout ages.

Agatha. And look well through all?

Laertes. Aye, and look better than they lookt before.

Agatha. I wish he could make me so, and without
 My going for it anywhere below.
 I am content to stay in Ithaca,
 Where the dogs know me, and the ferryman
 Asks nothing from me, and the rills are full
 After the rain, and flowers grow everywhere,

And bees grudge not their honey, and the grape
Grows within reach, and figs, blue, yellow, green,
Without my climbing; boys, too, come at call;
And, if they hide the ripest, I know where
To find it, twist and struggle as they may;
Impudent boys! to make me bring it out,
Saying I shall not have it if I don't!

Laertes. How the child babbles! pardon her! behold
Her strength and stature have outgrown her wits!
In fourteen years thou thyself wast not wise.

Homer. My heart is freshen'd by a fount so pure
At its springhead; let it run on in light.
Most girls are wing'd with wishes, and can ill
Keep on their feet against the early gale
That blows impetuous on unguarded breast;
But this young maiden, I can prophecy,
Will be thy staff when other staff hath fail'd.

Agatha. May the Gods grant it! but not grant it yet!
Blessings upon thy head!

Homer. May they bestow
Their choicest upon thine! may they preserve
Thy comeliness of virtue many years
For him whose hand thy master joins to thine!

Agatha. O might I smoothen that mild wrinkled brow
With but one kiss!

Laertes. Take it. Now leave us, child,
And bid our good Metampos to prepare
That brazen bath wherein my rampant boy
Each morning lay full-length, struggling at first,
Then laughing as he splasht the water up
Against his mother's face bent over him.
Is this the Odysseus first at quoit and bar?
Is this the Odysseus call'd to counsel kings,
He whose name sounds beyond our narrow sea?

Agatha. O how I always love to hear that name!

Laertes. But linger not; pursue the task at hand:
Bethink thee 'tis for one who has the power
To give thee many days beyond old-age.

Agatha. O! tell him not to do it if he can:
He cannot make youth stay: the swallows come
And go, youth goes, but never comes again.

Laertes. He can make heroes greater than they were.

Agatha. By making them lay by the wicked sword?
How I shall love him when he has done that!

Laertes. No, but he gives them strength by magic song.

Agatha. The strength of constancy to love but one?

As did Odysseus while he lived on earth,
And when he waited for her in the shades.

Laertes. The little jay! go, chatterer.

Agatha (to HOMER). Do not think,
O stranger, he is wroth; he never is
With Agatha, albeit he stamps and frowns
And shakes three fingers at her, and forbears
To do the like to any one beside.

Hark! the brass sounds, the bath is now prepared.

Laertes. More than the water shall her hand assuage
Thy weary feet, and lead thee back, now late.

HOMER. LAERTES. AGATHA.

SECOND DAY.

In the Morning.

Homer. Whose is the soft and pulpy hand that lies
Athwart the ridges of my craggy one
Out of the bed? can it be Agatha's?

Agatha. I come to bring thee, while yet warm and frothy,
A draught of milk. Rise now, rise just half-up,
And drink it. Hark! the birds, two at a time,
Are singing in the terebinth. Our king
Hath taken down his staff and gone afield
To see the men begin their daily work.

Homer. Go thou to thine: I will arise. How sweet
Was that goat's milk!

Agatha. We have eleven below,
All milchers. Wouldst thou now the tepid bath?

Homer. Rather when thou hast laid on the left-hand
My sandals within reach; bring colder lymph
To freshen more the frame-work of mine eyes,
For eyes there are, altho' their orbs be dark.

Agatha. 'Tis here; let me apply it.

Homer. Bravely done!
Why standest thou so still and taciturn?

Agatha. The king my master hath forbidden me
Ever to ask a question: if I might,
And were not disobedience such a sin,
I would ask thee, so gentle and so wise,
Whether the story of that bad Calypso
Can be all true, for it would grieve me sorely

To think thou wouldst repeat it were it false,
And some ill-natured God (such Gods there are)
Would punish thee, already too afflicted.

Homer. My child! the Muses sang the tale I told,
And they know more about that wanton Nymph
Than they have uttered into mortal ear.
I do rejoice to find thee fond of truth.

Agatha. I was not always truthful. I have smarted
For falsehood, under Queen Penelope,
When I was little. I should hate to hear
More of that wicked creature who detain'd
Her lord from her, and tried to win his love.
I know 'twas very wrong in me to listen.

Homer. A pardonable fault: we wish for listeners
Whether we speak or sing, the young and old
Alike are weak in this, unwise and wise,
Cheerful and sorrowful.

Agatha. O! look up yonder!
Why dost thou smile? everything makes thee smile
At silly Agatha, but why just now?

Homer. What was the sight?

Agatha. O inconsiderate!
O worse than inconsiderate! cruel! cruel!

Homer. Tell me, what was it? I can see thro' speech.

Agatha. A tawny bird above; he prowls for hours,
Sailing on wilful wings that never flag
Until they drop headlong to seize the prey.
The hinds shout after him and make him soar
Eastward: our little birds are safe from kites
And idler boys.

'Tis said (can it be true?)
In other parts men catch the nightingale
To make it food.

Homer. Nay, men eat men.

Agatha. Ye Gods!
But men hurt one another, nightingales
Console the weary with unweari'd song,
Until soft slumber on the couch descends.
The king my master and Penelope
Forbade the slaughter or captivity
Of the poor innocents who trusted them,
Nor robbed them even of the tiniest grain.

Homer. Generous and tender is thy master's heart,
Warm as the summer, open as the sky.

Agatha. How true! how I do love thee for these words!
Stranger, didst thou not hear him wail aloud,

Groan after groan, broken, but ill suppress,
 When thou recitedst in that plaintive tone
 How Anticleia met her son again
 Amid the shades below ?

Thou shouldst have stopt
 Before that tale was told by thee ; that one
 At least was true, if none were true before.
 In vain, O how in vain, I smote my breast
 To keep more quiet what would beat within !
 Never were words so sweet, so sad, as those.
 I sobb'd apart, I could not check my tears :
 Laertes too, tho' stronger, could not his,
 They glistened in their channels and would run,
 Nor could he stop them with both hands : he heard
 My sobs, and call'd me little fool for them ;
 Then did he catch and hold me to his bosom,
 And bid me never do the like again.

Homer. The rains in their due season will descend,
 And so will tears ; they sink into the heart
 To soften, not to hurt it. The best men
 Have most to weep for, whether foreign lands
 Receive them (or still worse !) a home estranged.

Agatha. Listen. I hear the merry yelp of dogs,
 And now the ferrel'd staff drops in the hall,
 And now the master's short and hurried step
 Advances : here he is : turn round, turn round.

Laertes. Hast thou slept well, Mæonides ?

Homer. I slept
 Three hours ere sunrise, 'tis my wont, at night
 I lie awake for nearly twice as long.

Laertes. Ay ; singing birds wake early, shake their plumes,
 And carol ere they feed. Sound was thy sleep ?

Homer. I felt again, but felt it undisturb'd,
 The pelting of the little curly waves,
 The slow and heavy stretch of rising billows,
 And the rapidity of their descent.
 I thought I heard a Triton's shell, a song
 Of sylvian Nymph, and laughter from behind
 Trees not too close for voices to come thro',
 Or beauty, if Nymph will'd it, to be seen ;
 And then a graver and a grander sound
 Came from the sky, and last a long applause.

Laertes. Marvellous things are dreams ! methinks we live
 An age in one of them, we traverse lands
 A lifetime could not reach, bring from the grave
 Inhabitants who never met before,

And vow we will not leave an absent friend
We long have left, and who leaves *us* ere morn.

Homer. Dreams are among the blessings Heaven bestows
On weary mortals; nor are they least
Altho' they disappoint us and are gone
When we awake! 'Tis pleasant to have caught
The clap of hands below us from the many,
Amid the kisses of the envious few.
There is a pride thou knowest not, *Laertes*,
In carrying the best strung and loudest harp.

Laertes. Apollo, who deprived thee of thy light
When youth was fresh and nature bloom'd around,
Bestowed on thee gifts never dim with age,
And rarely granted to impatient youth.
The crown thou wearest reddens not the brow
Of him who wears it worthily; but some
Are snatcht by violence, some purloin'd by fraud,
Some dripping blood, not by the Gods unseen.
To thee, O wise *Mæonides*, to thee
Worthless is all that glitters and attracts
The buzzing insects of a summer hour.
The Gods have given thee what themselves enjoy,
And they alone, glory through endless days.
The Lydian king *Sarpedon* never sway'd
Such sceptre, nor did *Glaucos* his compeer,
Nor *Priam*. *Priam* was about my age,
He had more sorrows than I ever had;
I lost one son, some fifty *Priam* lost;
This is a comfort, I may rub my palms
Thinking of this, and bless the Powers above.

Homer. One wicked son brought down their vengeance on him,
And his wide realms invited numerous foes.

Laertes. Alas! alas! are there not cares enow
In ruling nearly those five thousand heads,
Men, women, children; arbitrating right
And wrong, and hearing maids and mothers wail;
For flax blown off the cliff when almost bleacht,
And curlew tamed in vain and fled away,
Albeit one wing was shortened; then approach
To royal ear the whisper that the bird
Might peradventure have alighted nigh,
And hist upon the charcoal, skinn'd and split.
Bounteous as are the Gods, where is the wealth
To stop these lamentations with a gift
Adequate to such losses? words are light,
And words come opposite, with heavy groans.

Homer. The pastor of the people may keep watch,
Yet cares as wakeful creep into the fold.

Laertes. Beside these city griefs, what mortal knows
The anxieties about my scattered sheep?
Some bleating for lost offspring, some for food,
Scanty in winter, scantier in the drought
Of Sirius; then again the shrubs in spring,
Cropt close, ere barely budded, by the goats.
Methinks these animals are over-nice
About their food, else might they pick sea-weeds,
But these forsooth they trample on, nor deign
To taste even samphire, which their betters cull.
There also are some less sollicitudes
About those rocks, when plunderers from abroad
Would pilfer eggs and nestlings; my own folk
Are abstinent, without their king's decree.

Homer. To help thee in such troubles, and in worse,
Where is thy brave Telemakos?

Laertes. That youth
Is gone to rule Dulikeon, where the soil
Tho' fitter than our Ithaca for tilth,
Bears only turbulence and idleness.
He with his gentle voice and his strong arm,
Will bring into due train the restive race.

Homer. Few will contend with gentleness and youth,
Even of those who strive against the Laws,
But some subvert them who could best defend,
And in whose hands the Gods have placed the sword.
On the mainland there are, unless report
Belie them, princes who, possessing realms
Wider than sight from mountain-head can reach,
Would yet invade a neighbour's stony croft,
Pretending danger to their citadels
From fishermen ashore, and shepherd boys
Who work for daily and but scanty bread,
And wax the reeds to pipe at festivals,
Where the dogs snarl at them above the bones.

Laertes. What! would the cloth'd in purple, as are some,
Rip off the selvage from a ragged coat?
Accursed be the wretch, and whoso'er
Upholds him, or connives at his misdeeds.
Away with thoughts that sadden even this hour!

Homer. I would indeed away with 'em, but wrath
Rings on the lyre and swells above the song.
It shall be heard by those who stand on high,
But shall not rouse the lowlier, long opprest,

Who might be madden'd at his broken sleep,
And wrenching out the timbers of his gate
Batter the prince's down.

Laertes. Ye Gods forbid!
Thou makest the skin creep upon my flesh,
Albeit the danger lies from me afar.
Now surely this is but a songman's tale,
Yet songman never here discourst like thee,
Or whispered in low voice what thou hast sung,
Striking the lyre so that the strings all trembled.
Are people anywhere grown thus unruly?

Homer. More are they who would rule than would be ruled,

Yet one must govern, else all run astray.
The strongest are the calm and equitable,
And kings at best are men, nor always that.

Laertes. I have known many who have call'd me friend,
Yet would not warn me tho' they saw ten skiffs
Grating the strand with three score thieves in each.

Curse on that chief across the narrow sea,
Who drives whole herds and flocks innumerable,
And whose huge presses groan with oil and wine
Year after year, yet fain would carry off
The crying kid, and strangle it for crying.
Alas, Mæonides, the weakest find
Strength enough to inflict deep injuries.
Much have I borne, but 'twas from those below;
Thou knowest not the gross indignities
From goat-herd and from swine-herd I endur'd
When my Odysseus had gone far away;
How they consumed my substance, how the proud
Divided my fat kine in this my house,
And wooed before mine eyes Penelope,
Reluctant and absconding till return'd
Her lawful lord, true, chaste, as she herself.

Homer. I know it, and remotest men shall know.
If we must suffer wrong, 'tis from the vile
The least intolerable.

Laertes. True, my son
Avenged me: more than one God aided him,
But one above the rest; the Deity
Of wisdom, stronger even than him of war,
Guided the wanderer back, and gave the arms
And will and prowess to subdue our foes,
And their own dogs lapt up the lustful blood
Of the proud suitors. Sweet, sweet is revenge;

Her very shadow, running on before,
Quickens our pace until we hold her fast.

Homer. Rather would I sit quiet than pursue.

Laertes. Now art thou not, from such long talk, athirst?
Split this pomegranate then, and stoop the jar.
Hold! I can stoop it: take this cup. 'tis fill'd.

Homer. Zeus! God of hospitality! vouchsafe
To hear my prayer, as thou hast often done,
That, when thy lightnings spring athwart the sea,
And when thy thunders shake from brow to base
The Acrokerauneans, thy right hand protect
This Ithaca, this people, and this king! *

LAERTES. HOMER. AGATHA.

THIRD DAY.

Homer. And now, Mæonides, the sun hath risen
These many spans above the awaken'd earth,
Sing me that hymn, which thou hast call'd thy best,
In glory to the God who gives it light.

First I will call the child to hear thee sing,
For girls remember well and soon repeat
What they have heard of sacred more or less.
I must forbear to join in it, although
That blessed God hath helpt to rear my grain
High as my knee, and made it green and strong.
Alas! I cackle when I aim to sing,
Which I have sometimes done at festivals,
But, ere a word were out, methought I felt
A beard of barley sticking in my throat.

[AGATHA enters.]

Now, with a trail of honey down the cup
(Agatha, drop it in), commence thy chaunt.

(About the 500th verse LAERTES falls asleep: awakening he
finds AGATHA in the same state, and chides her.)

Hast thou no reverence for a song inspired?

Agatha (in a whisper). Hush! O my king and lord, or he
may hear.

You were asleep the first: I kept my eyes

* It has been doubted and denied that Homer and Laertes were contemporary.

Wide open, opener than they ever were,
While I do think I could have counted more
Than half a thousand of those words divine,
Had both my hands not dropt upon my lap.

Laertes. Another time beware of drowsiness
When reverend men discourse about the Gods.
Now lead him forth into the cooler porch,
Entreating him that he will soon renew
His praises of Apollo.

Agatha. I will bear
Your words to him; he might care less for mine,
And, sooth to say, I would much rather hear
Some other story, where more men than Gods
Shine on the field.

Laertes. Of men thou know'st enough.

Agatha. Too much: then why show Gods almost as bad?
They can not be . . . least of all Artemis;
'Twas she directed and preserved Odysseus.

Laertes. Blessings upon thee! While thou wast a babe
He fondled thee, nor saw when thou couldst walk.
Few love so early or so long: We say
We love the Gods: we lie; the seen alone
We love, to those unseen we may be grateful.

Agatha. But when they are no more before our eyes . . .

Laertes. That never is, altho' earth come between.
Perplex not thou thy simple little head
With what the wise were wiser to let be.

Agatha. I go, and will not be again perplext.

[*Aside.*

He has been dozing while we have convers't.

Mæonides! rise and take this arm
To lead thee where is freshness in the porch.
My master tells me thou another time
Wilt finish that grand hymn about Apollo.
Hast thou no shorter one for Artemis?

Homer. Such thou shalt have for her, but not to-day.

Agatha. O, I can wait, so (I am sure) can she.

Homer. Faint are the breezes here, less faint above;
Gladly then would I mount that central peak
Which overlooks the whole of Ithaca,
That peak I well remember I once clomb
(What few could do) without the help of beast.

Agatha. Here are sure-footed ones, who weed our thistles,
And give us milk, grey dappled as the dawn:
Their large and placid eyes well know that path,
And they will bring us safely to the top

And back again, treading more warily
Than up the ascent.

I will call forth two boys
To lead them, without switches in the fist.
These two can lift thee up; I at thy side
Require no help, and can whisk off the flies.

Homer. I know not what impels me to retrace
Scenes I can see no more: but so it is
Thro' life.

If thou art able, lead me forth,
And let none follow; we are best alone.

Agatha. Come forward ye.
Now lift up carefully
The noblest guest that ever king received
And the Gods favour most.

Well done! now rest,
Nor sing nor whistle till we all return,
And reach the chesnut and enjoy the shade.

Homer (at the summit). I think we must be near the highest
point,

For now the creatures stop, who struggled hard,
And the boys neither cheer 'em, nor upbraid.
'Tis somewhat to have mounted up so high,
Profitless as it is, nor without toil.

Agatha. Dost thou feel weary?

Homer. Short as was the way
It shook my aged bones at every step;
My shoulders ache, my head whirls round and round.

Agatha. Lean on my shoulder, place thy head on mine,
'Tis low enough.

What were those words? . . . I heard
Imperfectly . . . shame on me! Dost thou smile?

Homer. Child! hast thou ever seen an old man die?

Agatha. The Gods defend me from so sad a sight!

Homer. Sad if he die in agony, but blest
If friend be nigh him, only one true friend.

Agatha. Tho' most of thine be absent, one remains;
Is not Laertes worthy of the name?

Homer. And Agatha, who tends me to the last.

Agatha. I will, I will indeed, when comes that hour.

Homer. That hour is come.

Let me lay down my head
On the cool turf; there I am sure to rest.

Agatha (after a pause). How softly old men sigh! Sleep,
gentle soul!

He turns his face to me. Ah how composed!

Surely he sleeps already . . . hand and cheek
 Are colder than such feeble breeze could make 'em.
 Mæonides! hearest thou Agatha?
 He hears me not . . . Can it . . . can it be . . . death?
 Impossible . . . 'tis death . . . 'tis death indeed . . .
 Then, O ye Gods of heaven! who would not die,
 If thus to rest eternal, he descend?
 O, my dear lord! how shall I comfort thee?
 How look unto thy face and tell my tale,
 And kneeling clasp thy knees? to be repulst
 Were hard, but harder to behold thy grief.

Homer's age is uncertain. He may have been, or may not, the contemporary of Laertes. Chronology and poesy are not twins. Two heavy volumes might never have befallen us if their author had consulted Pericles and Aspasia. Among the hymns attributed to Homer is one to Apollo, which may well have made an old man and a young girl somnolent.

[The "two heavy volumes" were the first two volumes of Mr. Gladstone's work on Homer. "Whatever," said Landor, "is worth notice in them may be found in Pericles and Aspasia."]

HIPPOMENES AND ATALANTA.

HIPPOMENES and Atalanta strove
 To win a race: he lov'd her: but she shunn'd
 All lovers, and her royal sire had sworn
 That none should marry her unless the one
 Swifter of foot, believing none could match
 His girl in fleetness, and decreed that all
 Should surely die who fail'd in such attempt.
 Courageously came forth Hippomenes.
 She once beheld him, and she pitied him,
 For she had made a vow to Artemis
 That she would never violate a word
 Her father had exacted.

Now the hour
 Had come to prove her faith; the venturous youth
 Stood now before her. Down she cast her eyes,
 And cried in broken words, "Rash youth! depart,
 The Fates (thou seest them not) are close behind;
 Seven brave youths, hardly less brave than thou,
 Have fallen for contending in the race
 With wretched Atalanta . . . Go."

Hippomenes. To live
 For Atalanta is the first of glory,

To die for her the next : this they enjoyed
In death, the better they bequeath to me.

Atalanta. Pity I gave them, do not ask for more,
Nor for such cause ; let me not weep again,
Let that be the last time.

Hippomenes. So may it be !
So shall it ; for the Gods have given me strength
And confidence : one name for victory.
Certain I am to win.

Atalanta. No, thou rash boy !
If thou must try such hazard . . . if thou must . . .
Must ? what impels thee ? madness ! There is time
Yet to turn back ; I do implore thee . . . go.
Artemis sees me.

Hippomenes. Aphrodite sees
Me, and smiles on me, and instructs me how . . .

Atalanta. Cease, cease, this instant : I abhor the name ;
My Goddess hates her, should not I ? I do.

Hippomenes. I love all Goddesses, the kindest most,
And I beseech her now to make me grateful.

Atalanta. All I can hope for is thy swift escape ;
Be prompt : I see white sails below the cliff ;
My father soon shall know 'twas my command,
He wills obedience, he shall value thine,
And send thee gifts.

Hippomenes. I want but one, which one
The king shall give me.

Atalanta. What is that ?

Hippomenes. This hand.

Atalanta. And snatchest thou my hand ? audacious creature !
No man hath dared to touch it until now,
Nor I converst with any half so long.

Hippomenes. Not half so long have any loved as I.

Atalanta. Insane ! it was but yesterday we met.

Hippomenes. In yesterday, its day and night, lay years.

Atalanta. I never was dissembler. I will pass
Unyoked thro' life.

Hippomenes. O Atalanta ! love
No yoke imposes, he removes the heaviest
The Destinies would throw around the neck
Of youth, who wearies in the dismal way
Of lonely life.

Atalanta. I do not comprehend
Those flighty words, they sound like idle song.

Hippomenes. Scoff not, add not another to the seven,
Without a race for it ; my breath is failing.

Atalanta. O perfidy! to make me weep again!
Others too may have loved.

Hippomenes. But not like me;
Else would the Gods have rais'd them to themselves,
Ay, and above themselves, in happiness,
Crowning the best of them with amaranth.

Atalanta. Zeus holds the scales of weal and woe.

Hippomenes.

Zeus holds

them,
But little Eros with light finger stoops
The balance-bowl: Zeus shakes his head and smiles.

Atalanta. What wouldst thou?

Hippomenes. Thee; thee only; no rich isle,
No far dominion over land and sea.

Atalanta. Easier to win than what thou seekest here.
Remember last year's fruit; it lies beneath
The seven hillocks of yon turf, ill-squared
And disunited yet, on the left hand.
Shame! thus to weaken me in my resolve,
And break my father's heart! no, thou shalt not.

Hippomenes. I blame not tears for those who bravely fell.

Atalanta. I never did shed tears, and never will.
Come, let us lose no time, if strive we must.
The sword is level here and sound and soft;
Throw off thy sandals, I will throw off mine.
Start.

They both started; he, by one stride, first,
For she half pitied him so beautiful,
Running to meet his death, yet was resolved
To conquer: soon she near'd him, and he felt
The rapid and repeated gush of breath
Behind his shoulder.

From his hand now dropt
A golden apple: she lookt down and saw
A glitter on the grass, yet on she ran.
He dropt a second; now she seem'd to stoop:
He dropt a third; and now she stoopt indeed:
Yet, swifter than a wren picks up a grain
Of millet, rais'd her head: it was too late,
Only one step, only one breath, too late.
Hippomenes had toucht the maple goal
With but two fingers, leaning pronely forth.
She stood in mute despair; the prize was won.

Now each walkt slowly forward, both so tired,
And both alike breathed hard, and stopt at times.
When he turn'd round to her, she lowered her face

Cover'd with blushes, and held out her hand,
The golden apple in it.

“ Leave me now,”

Said she, “ I must walk homeward.”

He did take

The apple and the hand.

“ Both I detain,”

Said he, “ the other two I dedicate
To the two Powers that soften virgin hearts,
Eros and Aphroditè ; and this one
To her who ratifies the nuptial vow.”

She would have wept to see her father weep ;
But some God pitied her, and purple wings
(What God's were they ?) hovered and interposed.

SAPPHO, ALCÆUS, ANACREON, PHAON.

Sappho. I wonder at the malice of the herd
Against us poets. O what calumnies
Do those invent who can invent nought else !
'Tis said, Alcæus, thou hast run away
From battle.

Alcæus. Idlers show no idleness
In picking up and spreading false reports.
Nay, 'tis said also (thing incredible)
That women carry them from house to house,
And twirl and sniff them as they would a rose.
Nothing is lighter than an empty tale,
Or carried farther on with fresh relays ;
No ball do children leap at with more glee,
Catch, and look more triumphant, than do men
At lies : such men, day after day, come here :
Yet, Sappho, which among the worst can say
I love thee not ?

Sappho. Well, well !

Alcæus. To be beloved
By Sappho raises mortal nigh the Gods
In bliss and glory ; not to love her sinks
The proudest head below the beasts that perish.
They who look down from heaven into our hearts
See truth, how deep ! in mine.

Sappho. They know the true,
They know the brave, and value them alike.

Anacreon. Pick up thy shield, man! There was no delay
Upon that meadow, soft to run upon,
Where even the tenderest grass seem'd strong enough
To impede thee like a barrier, every reed
A pointed spear, and every twittering bird
Sounded like trumpet, when two lifted hands
Shielded two ears upright as leveret's.

Sappho. I never thought Anacreon was so fierce,
But even doves are vicious now and then.

Alcæus. I burn to smite him on the mouth for this.

Sappho. Sit down, Alcæus; none are angry here.
Do wise men rear and start at sparks of wit?

Alcæus. Sparks fly up, drop, and die; pure incense burns
Without them.

Sappho. Incense usually begins
In smoke, and ends in ashes.

Alcæus. Not so mine.

Sappho. I wish thy voice attuned to notes less grave.

Alcæus. Ah! can it ever be attuned to thine?
Love checks it.

Anacreon. Love, it seems, may check thy tongue,
But not thy feet. I wish my verses ran
On feet as light as those which left their soles
Behind them at the clarion's nearer blasts;
The lightest lyre would have been heavy there.

Sappho (*PHAON entering*). Be calm, Alcæus! be less petulant,
Anacreon! Thy persuasive voice, my Phaon,
May harmonize these wranglers.

Phaon. Ah! what voice
Could ever harmonize like thine the chords
Of the most rigid breast! a ray of thine
Awakes to song, as the bright Morn awakes
Upon the desert sand her Memnon's lyre.

Anacreon. By Zeus! he beats us both. Sing, sing away.
Alcæus! I will try another time.

(*To SAPPHO.*) Already this brave warrior hath confest
His voice defective in the praise of thee.

Alcæus. I did confess it, and will prove it now.
(*Sings.*) Glory of Lesbos! where Apollo's hand
Led thee among us mortals, nor withdrew
When Aphroditè claim'd thee for her own,
Over what distant ages shalt thou pass,
And thro' what distant regions men shall hear
The song of Sappho, and her praise in all.

Phaon (*to SAPPHO*). I hate such sing-song from my very soul;
'Tis only proper for hard-fisted girls

Who, crouching on low tressel, milk the goat.
As for that tippler on the other side,
I often hear his verses in the street ;
There children stagger, imitating him,
And he runs sidelong after them, and trips.

Sappho. Why lookest thou so gloomily ? say, speak.
Surely thou art not jealous, like a poet.

Phaon. Jealous I am not ; but can ill endure
To see a rival wear a gift of thine.

Sappho. I would not give it hadst not thou been by.

Phaon. Songsters are ever most importunate.

Sappho. We like a bird to sing to us sometimes.

Phaon. Some birds would put their beaks on softer ones.

Sappho. I have known maidens let their sparrow do it,
Holding the wing on purpose.

Thou art cold

And peevish : be what thou hast been till now.

Whenever Phaon came, all went away,

As those have done.

Phaon. But thou hast given my gift,
If mine it was.

Sappho. O cruelest of words !
Were it not thine, and worn till it was dead,
The kitten had been tearing it for play ;
I wore it only for thy coming, sure
To have a fresher, so now give it me,
Or lay it on the table : if not, take
Some trouble with it in a fitter place,
Where thou hast often spent much time and tried
Contrivances, and tried again, to bend
A riotous curl obedient to thy will.

Phaon. Forgive me, Sappho. Let me twine it round
Thy sadden'd brow : how hot it is ! Had love
And not vexation caus'd it, even then
I might almost have griev'd. Yes ! any pain
Thou feelest, I feel more.

Sappho. Of love ?

Phaon. That worst,
Until thy breath wafted it all away.

Sappho. When thy love perishes, I shall believe
The Gods have perisht too, one only left,
And he to laugh and taunt me.

Phaon. Truth herself
Shall first leave earth and heaven. Now wipe thine eyes.

Sappho. Thou shalt then lower thy lips.

Phaon. And crush that smile.

THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA.

Hippolyta. Eternal hatred I have sworn against
The persecutor of my sisterhood ;
In vain, proud son of Ægeus, hast thou snapt
Their arrows and derided them ; in vain
Leadest thou me a captive ; I can die,
And die I will.

Theseus. Nay ; many are the years
Of youth and beauty for Hippolyta.

Hippolyta. I scorn my youth, I hate my beauty. Go !
Monster ! of all the monsters in these wilds
Most frightful and most odious to my sight.

Theseus. I boast not that I saved thee from the bow
Of Scythian.

Hippolyta. And for what ? to die disgraced.
Strong as thou art, yet thou art not so strong
As Death is, when we call him for support.

Theseus. Him too will I ward off ; he strikes me first,
Hippolyta long after, when these eyes
Are closed, and when the knee that supplicates
Can bend no more.

Hippolyta. Is the man mad ?

Theseus. He is.

Hippolyta. So, thou canst tell one truth, however false
In other things.

Theseus. What other ? Thou dost pause,
And thine eyes wander over the smooth turf
As if some gem (but gem thou wearest not)
Had fallen from the remnant of thy hair.

Hippolyta ! speak plainly, answer me,
What have I done to raise thy fear or hate ?

Hippolyta. Fear I despise, perfidy I abhor.
Unworthy man ! did Heracles delude
The maids who trusted him ?

Theseus. Did ever I ?

Whether he did or not, they never told me :
I would have chided him.

Hippolyta. Thou chide him ! thou !
The Spartan mothers well remember thee.

Theseus. Scorn adds no beauty to the beautiful.
Heracles was beloved by Omphalè,
He never parted from her, but obey'd
Her slightest wish, as Theseus will Hippolyta's.

Hippolyta. Then leave me, leave me instantly; I know
The way to my own country.

Theseus. This command,
And only this, my heart must disobey.
My country shall be thine, and there thy state
Regal.

Hippolyta. Am I a child? give me my own,
And keep for weaker heads thy diadems.
Thermodon I shall never see again,
Brightest of rivers, into whose clear depth
My mother plunged me from her warmer breast,
And taught me early to divide the waves
With arms each day more strong, and soon to chase
And overtake the father swan, nor heed
His hoarser voice or his uplifted wing.

Where are my sisters? Are there any left?

Theseus. I hope it.

Hippolyta. And I fear it: theirs may be
A fate like mine; which, O ye Gods, forbid!

Theseus. I pity thee, and would assuage thy grief.

Hippolyta. Pity me not; thy anger I could bear.

Theseus. There is no place for anger where thou art.
Commiseration even men may feel
For those who want it: even the fiercer beasts
Lick the sore-wounded of a kindred race,
Hearing their cry, albeit they may not help.

Hippolyta. This is no falsehood: and can he be false
Who speaks it?

I remember not the time
When I have wept, it was so long ago.
Thou forest tears from me, because . . . because . . .
I can not hate thee as I ought to do.

THE TRIAL OF ÆSCHYLOS.

Judge. Bring into court the culprit, him accused
Of having, and deliberately, betray'd
The mysteries of Eleusis.

Æschylos. Here I stand,
No culprit, and no jailer brings me forth.

Judge. Hast thou not, Æschylos, divulged the rites
Taught by Demeter?

Æschylos. What have I divulged

Beside the truths the Gods to men impart,
 And none beside the worthy do they trust.
 The human breast they open and they close,
 And who can steal their secrets? who shall dare
 Infringe their laws, or who arraign their will?
 Ye men of Athens! before *you* I stand,
 Known to ye long ago, nor only here,
 But on the plain of Marathon: who flinch
 In that fierce fray? did I? and shall I now?
 The brave man venerates, the base man fears,
 I scorn to supplicate, or even to plead,
 For well I know there is a higher court,
 A court of last appeal.

Judge.

We know it not;

Where is it situated?

Æschylos.

In man's heart.

In life it may be barr'd, so dark that none
 See into it, not he himself; Death comes,
 And then the Furies leave their grove and strike.

Citizen. He spake no wiser words upon the stage,
 Where all men speak their wisest and their best.

Another Citizen. I wish he had not said a word about
 Those Furies; Death is bad enough.

First Citizen.

Hush! hush!

The Arkon rises up and waves his hand.

Judge. What say ye, men of Athens, to the charge

Ye heard denounced this morning? Are ye mute?

Sadness I see in some, in others wrath,

Wrath ill becomes the seat I occupy;

And even sadness I would fain suppress.

But who can bear irreverence to his Gods?

Their profanation (by your laws) is death.

Amyntos (Rushes forward and bares his brother's scars). What
 have these merited? These wounds he won

From Persia, nothing else. Let others show
 The purple vestures, stript from satraps slain,
 He slew them, and left those for weaker hands
 To gather up, and to adorn their wives.

Æschylos. Amyntos is my brother, so are ye. (*To AMYNTOS.*)

But why display my ragged white-faced scar?

Why show the place where one arm *was*, if one
 Keeps yet its own? this left can wield the sword.

Amyntos. Fling not thy cloak about thee, nor turn round,
 Nay, brother, thou shalt not conceal the scars
 With that one hand yet left thee.

Citizens!

Behold the man, that impious man, who smote
 Those who defiled the altars of your Gods.
 Look up : is Pallas standing on yon hill ?
 She would not have been standing there unless
 Men like the man before ye had well fought
 At Marathon, not braver than some here
 Who fought with him and bound his shattered limb.
 If Æschylos your comrade had profaned
 Her mysteries, would Demeter have blest
 Your fields with what we call the staff of life,
 To give ye strength and courage to protect
 Your country, wives, and friends.

Ye want him not,
 But ye may miss him in the hour of need.
 If irreligious wretch hath violated
 What all hold sacred, Æschylos not least,
 To death condemn him.

Weep not thou, whoe'er
 Thou art, nor stamp thou other, no, nor shout,
 Impatient men ! impatient as for battle.
 If there be any here who deem him guilty,
 To death condemn him, or to worse than death,
 Drive him from Athens, bid him raise no more
 Your hearts and souls, for he no more can fight
 To save our country, nor call heroes down
 To stand before ye, not more brave than he,
 Alas ! alas ! nor more unfortunate.

Citizen. Truth, by the Gods ! thou speakest.

Judge.

Judges who sit beside me.

Judge.

By all the people ; we confirm the voice.

Æschylos, go in peace.

Citizen.

In glory go.
 Are there no clarions nigh, to waft him home
 With their strong blast ? no harp to ring before ?

Another Citizen. No olive ? none there had been but for him
 In all this land.

Another Citizen. At least we can raise up
 Our voices to the hymn they have begun,
 And call our children to come forth and kiss
 The threshold that our Æschylos hath crost.

Speak ye too,

MARCUS AURELIUS AND LUCIAN.

Aurelius. Lucian! in *one* thing thou art ill advised.

Lucian. And in one only? Tell me which is that?

Aurelius. In scoffing, as thou hast done openly,
At all religions; there is truth in all.

Lucian. Ah, could we see it! but the well is deep.
Each mortal calls his God inscrutable,
And this at least is true, then why not stop?
Some subsidize him, others split him down
From nape to navel, others bandage him,
Forcing the sub-divisions to unite.

These should have lived in Saturn's day, his son
Methinks had found them easier work to do.

Eclectic are we Romans, yet we run
(Pardon me, Pontifex!) from bad to worse.
Those which Fear palsies and which Fraud sustains,
Not the erect and strenuous, I deride.

The worshiper of Mithras lifts his eyes
To hail his early rising, for he knows
Who ripens all the grain to nourish him:
Olympus and the Alps are hills alike
To him, and goats their best inhabitants.

Did Epictetus take our rotten staves
To walk with uprightly? did Cicero
Kneel down before our urban deities?
He carried in his mouth a Jupiter
Ready for senates when he would harangue,
Then wiped him clean and laid him down again.

Aurelius. Gratitude to the Gods, to men, good will,
Is the religion I would cultivate,
Leaving as many gods upon the ground
As, season after season, may spring up
And stifle one another.

Lucian. Well, no harm!

Aurelius. Let each man weed his croft, not turn his kine
Into his neighbour's. What, if some prefer
The lofty holyhock, another bend
Over the bed where hang the modest bells
Of early cluster-lily.

When we fight
The Parthian, 'tis not that we hate his God,
The glorious Sun, for he is our God too.
When Alexander saw the Ganges roll

Before him, did he persecute a race
Devote to Budda ? did that race cut throats
To make men run the readier at their side ?
All things deteriorate, religions most.

Lucian. I set a drunken man upon his legs
And show him his own door, but enter not,
Therefore he curses me, and calls me lost,
And spits at me, and bids me go to hell.

Aurelius. Altho' we now are talking in our Greek,
We both know Latin.

Lucian. Well, what then ?

Aurelius. I hate

Quotations, and hate worse to intermix
Two languages : this we may do in talk,
But not in writing ! you Greeks never did.

Lucian. 'Twere folly ; for what legs get faster on
By straddling round the shoulders of another ?

Aurelius. Little of Roman poetry I hold
In memory, yet one sentence comes to hand
From the most amiable and least prolix.

Lucian. What then could he have said upon religion ?

Aurelius. Nothing indeed, but somewhat applicable.

*All have not the same faces, yet they all
Bear sisterly resemblance.*

Lucian. *His nymphs might,*
Our last was born in the decrepitude
Of her poor mother, and now leans on crutch,
Which she can swing about her if provoked.
Her dogmatists would narrow our Elysion,
And would extend the realm of Tartaros
And dam up Phlegethon to overflowing.

Aurelius. Lucian ! I think as thou dost, but abstain
From words that irritate where all should soothe.
I seldom laugh, and never in men's faces.

Lucian. The peace proclaimers bellow the most loud ;
My voice by nature is too weak to curse.
Religion, true or false, may lend support
To man's right conduct ; some deter from ill
By fear, and others lead by gentleness,
Benevolence in thought, beneficence
In action, and from these springs gratitude,
Which often widens into patriotism
Whereby men struggle for their native land.

Lucian. So much the worse for them. Did Julius spare
The Druid in his grove ? our Divus wrenched
The golden sickle from the mistletoe,

And burnt the wicker basket ere it held
Upon the sacred oak the wretch within.

Aurelius. I doubt it: well he knew the use of priests
And spared the Druids, proud unruly race,
Nor with their bloody rites would interfere.
Ambition was his fault, but clemency
Could over-rule ambition. . .

Lucian. . . . When the world
Lay at his feet and he too, was a God.

Aurelius. Ambition is at best but selfishness,
And stoops to scramble as the needy do.

Lucian. O Marcus, Marcus! art not thou ambitious?
Who holding in one hand the peopled globe,
Yet wouldst thou more?

Aurelius. Lucian! Not I indeed.

Lucian. Thou wouldst have much beyond this visible
Diurnal sphere, wouldst catch Fame, flying Fame.

Aurelius. Quiet be mine! and let Fame follow me.
Say on.

Lucian. Well then thou art an innovator,
Thou art a revolutionist.

Aurelius. Lucian! How so?

Lucian. Ay, greatest of all revolutionists,
The battle-field, O Marcus, thou hast turn'd
Into the corn-field. What would Julius say,
If Julius were not now among the Gods?

Aurelius. He did some evil, he removed much more.
He would not irritate weak intellects,
Nurst in religion, learnt by heart and rear'd
Upon a mother's knee, thence justly dear.

Lucian. Founded on falsehood are not all religions,
And copied more or less from older ones?
Some by transfusion purified, and some
Weakened, and pour'd again upon the dregs,
Until they first ferment and then turn sour.

Aurelius. The mildest and most genial is our own.

Lucian. Five carts conveying hither Gods from Veii,
Broke down and left their fragments in the road,
Yet plenty still remain to pick and choose,
And all are not fastidious; stern would look
Old Cato at some tasters of our fasti
And pelt them with what turnips were unsound,
Or but half rotten in his frugal farm:
His addled eggs he kept for favourite slaves,
Severe he would be where one calls a God'
To help him in his vengeance on a neighbour,

Who puts his left leg where he should the right,
And will not draw it back, but walk straight on.
His God was Terminus, his fane, the field.

Aurelius. Temples I seldom enter.

Not a God

Minds me above the atoms of the earth
Whereof we, great and little, are composed,
Such is the purest doctrine to uphold;
But to divulge even this may be unsafe.
Have we not known a sage of Palestine
Derided, persecuted, crucified?
Have we not seen his simple followers
Slaughter'd in this our city, this our Rome,
Some thrown among wild beasts, some burnt alive?

Lucian. Woefully true! and thieves and murderers
Have sprung up from the ground whereof they bled.

Aurelius. Woefully true this also, but unwise
Because unsafe to utter. Truth is more
Unsafe than falsehood, and was ever so.
Do not exasperate by pointed wit
The proud and the morose, but rather stoop
To raise them up from their infirmities.

Lucian. Poor creatures! they will kick me in the face
If at such office I bend over them;
Better to strip the sophists of their rings
And trailing trappings femininely loose,
With chanting boys in marshal'd troops before,
Waving fat incense up against their beards:
Soon at the Via Sacra they may halt
And choose an emperor of their own.

Aurelius. Friend Lucian! thou art more jocose than ever.
Why not imagine they may take my horse
From under me, then round men's shoulders strap
The curule chair and hoist a priest thereon?
Thy wit and wisdom, Lucian, long I've known,
But never found the poet until now.
Homer feign'd Polyphemus and Calyps,
Imagination left him on the strand
With those: he never saw even in a dream,
So strange a rider on a seat so strange:
Give him my purple, make the scene complete.

The sentiments of M. Aurelius and of Lucian are here exhibited. That Lucian was an honest man (if such a scoffer as he, and Rabelais, and Cervantes and Dean Swift are allowed to be) is probable by so sagacious and virtuous a prince as M. Aurelius appointing him to an important office in Egypt. There is more of banter than of wit in his Dialogues. In wit he is far inferior to Molière, Voltaire, Congreve, Swift, Hood, and some now living.

DAMOCLES AND HIERA.

Hiera. A kiss, indeed! was ever boy so bold?
 Who taught you such bad manners? Run away,
 Or presently I may be very angry:
 Stay; beg my pardon first. 'You look ashamed,
 And shame becomes the guilty. Kiss, indeed!
 Did ever maid or mortal hear the like!
 How many summers have you seen above
 Twelve at the most? I a whole twelvemonth more.
 Learn to revere your elders in your youth.

Damocles. Shake not my arm, it makes me feel so strange.
 I do ask pardon, lovely Hiera.

Hiera. Gods give me power to grant it! I am weak
 From such a sudden and severe a blow.

Damocles. I am not; though I should be: 'twas so wrong.

Hiera. The Gods take pity on the penitent.

Damocles. Do maidens never? can they do amiss
 In doing what the Gods do?

Hiera. You perplex me;
 To question so the deeds of those above
 Is impious.

Damocles. I would pray, but first to you,
 For you are like them in all other things,
 Why not in this?

Hiera. You talk beyond your years:
 Only rude men talk so.

Damocles. Give but one sign
 Of pardon.

Hiera. And what sign?

Damocles. Dare I repeat
 What I implored?

Hiera. What was it? I forget.

Damocles. One kiss; I ask but one.

Hiera. You foolish boy!

Well: take it: I don't give it, mind you that.

He gave the one; she added twenty more
 For his obedience; and he never sued
 After that eventide.

A swain averr'd
 That he descried in the deep wood a cheek
 At first aslant, then lower, then eclips'd.

Another said it was not in the wood,
But in the grotto near the water-fall,
And he alone had seen it.

The dispute

Ran high; a third declared that both were wrong.

END OF VOL. VII.

